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The Dilemma of the
Russian Rulers

F. Lohenbill

Feeling of Depression

Paul Ecker

Some Comments on
20th Century Poetry

John Ball

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Material and Documents

Correspondence on The Third World
Conference Against A- and H-Bombs

Rebecca Shelley
Paul Ecker

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NOTICE.

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F. Lohenbill

THE DILEMMA OF THE RUSSIAN RULERS

1. Khrushchev's speech on the 20th Party Congress.

The official propaganda of the West presented Khrushchev's speech, made more than a year ago on the 20th Congress of the Party, as a final break on the part of the Russian leadership with Stalinism. The Press induced their "Russian specialists" to write pseudo-scientific studies about "Russia's return to true Leninism" and thus revived the old horror story about Russia as the threatening aggressor which, after her return to Lenin and his "ideas of world revolution" was, of course, even more dangerous. Western propaganda thus once again played into the hands of the Kremlin by fostering the illusions of the Russian masses about the turn of events in their country. With wise foresight, the Russian Government did not even publish the speech, but let the American State Department do this. How clever this was, became apparent a few months later when the Kremlin had to drop its mask in Hungary and the true face of Russian totalitarianism revealed itself. When Khrushchev, who saw himself compelled to admit that he had never doubted the greatness of Stalin, was questioned about his speech by reporters, he could simply state with astonishment he did not know of which speech they were talking.

Isaac Deutscher who, next to Edward Crankshaw, is reputed to be the best expert on Russia on this side of the Atlantic, earned the fame of having elaborated in advance the theoretical foundations for the new line proclaimed at the 20th Party Congress. Deutscher's study of history reads like a theological dissertation—according to him the Stalin régime was the purifying purgatory through which the "Russian Revolution" had, by necessity, to pass in order to achieve that degree of industrialisation that would allow a democratisation of the country and a return to Leninism. Thus Deutscher establishes an automatic causal connection between industrialisation and democracy—the example of German fascism which based itself on the most developed European industry, he simply ignores.

How doubtful in reality the industrial progress in Russia is, has been shown recently by Khrushchev and Bulganin themselves, in their statements on Russian industry. Five-year Plans, mainly devoted to armaments, subordinating everything else to the fulfilment of bureaucratic control figures, could not lead to a properly proportioned industry, beneficial to the people. The people were not taken into consideration at all in this industrialisation so entirely regardless of the consumer; they merely had to suffer the pressure of the five-year plans.

No wonder, that an industry which had to produce illegally all consumer goods for a gigantic black market, from machine spare parts to frying pans, finds itself, after decades of such practices, in a hopeless muddle.

According to Deutscher, the progress of Stalin's industrialisation expresses itself amongst other things in the fact that each Russian has now at least one pair of shoes and that nobody must walk barefooted. This last is a daring statement if one considers that one pair of bad shoes costs a workman a month of his wages—but, even assuming that this is correct, can a miserable pair of shoes counterbalance the unspeakable sufferings which Stalin's senseless planning imposed upon the Russian people? Were the Russian people, even barefooted, not relatively better off under Czarism?

2. The development of totalitarianism in Russia.

Czarism, also, had weighed like a heavy load upon the whole population but not with such a heavy leaden weight as did Stalinism which destroyed with cruel thoroughness the traditional Russian mode of life on which Czarism had based itself. The beginning of capitalist development at the turn of the century did not basically alter this traditional mode of life; a radical change of social conditions came only after the October Revolution of 1917.

To-day, after 40 years of state capitalistic experiments in Russia, there can be no doubt but that this Revolution was in its essence a bourgeois revolution. The active resistance of the Russian bourgeoisie against the accomplishment of this revolution by the radical Russian intelligentsia is no denial of its bourgeois character; but merely demonstrates that a bourgeois overturn in Russia could not be brought about under the hitherto known traditional auspices. For a normal, organic development of capitalist conditions it was already too late in 1917; international Capitalism had transgressed the limits of its "natural" development and left no leeway for latecomers.

The agrarian reform in Russia was carried through with a radical consequence only equalled by the Great French Revolution; but whereas in 19th-century France the agrarian reform led to a solid peasantry well integrated into capitalist economy, in 20th-century Russia the accumulation of capital and the creation of capitalist conditions was possible only by a constant struggle against the peasantry.

The seizure of political power by the radical intelligentsia, whose first political act was the expropriation of the bourgeoisie, led to the establishment of bourgeois State rule without the bourgeoisie. The revolutionary intelligentsia itself thought itself to have established the first real rule of the people and to be about to accomplish a socialist revolution. These illusions, however, vanished under Stalin's despotism.

At a time when bourgeois progress had already reached its limits, it was impossible for capitalism in Russia to overcome feudalism progressively. Czarist feudalism merely gave way to a form of

capitalist "superfeudalism" which by brutal force became master over a country rich in raw materials and labour power; various forms of *forced labour* were used to build up the elements of an industry which carried from its inception the stamp of capitalist decadence. Under Stalin's rule of terror, the State functioning as "collective" bourgeois expressed the national needs of capitalist development, the historical necessity of which had already been lost in the development as a whole.

The fulfilment of this programme called for innumerable victims. Millions of people perished in the Siberian deserts and in the Asiatic steppes. Almost all large industrial concerns in Asiatic Russia were literally built upon the skeletons of countless camp slaves. Millions of peasants, driven off their land, had to walk the Calvary of the camp slaves, others were forced to work in factories under conditions of extreme misery, whilst those more "fortunate", not driven away as *Kulaks*, had to become slaves in the agricultural "Collectives" and had to hand over their produce to the State. And these infamies perpetrated by Stalin are to-day glorified by bourgeois ideologists and unscrupulous writers as great historical achievements.

Khrushchev's speech at the Conference stands in no contradiction to this point of view of the apologists in the West for in spite of his much quoted criticism of Stalinism it restricted itself entirely to superficial matters and never actually broke with Stalin-legend as concocted by Stalin himself! Little wonder! Khrushchev and the other rulers of Russia are flesh of Stalin's flesh and bear full co-responsibility for his crimes.

Nearly all cases quoted by Khrushchev as examples of Stalin's despotism are cases of Stalinists who had served their master faithfully as long as it suited him and who still under torture and before their execution kept the Stalin legend alive—for they begged the good Stalin for mercy and "enlightened" him about the methods used against them by the M.V.D. of which the noble hero of the legend certainly had no inkling! Only such compliant tools of the dictator as Kossior and Rudzutak were rehabilitated after their death! The real brains and leaders of the Revolution whom Stalin had put to death under the most nonsensical accusations, were not rehabilitated by Khrushchev. On the contrary: he repeated astutely the now stereotyped lie, how Stalin had saved Russia from the consequences of their ruinous policies by liquidating the Opposition from the right and the left; that this "ideological" struggle against the Opposition had been carried through with the terror of the secret police, he did not mention. Yet, Khrushchev knew very well—as his account of the murder of Kircv shows—that the accusations against the old Revolutionaries were a frame-up. Had it been his honest wish to make a clean break with the past and to give the final death blow to the Stalin myth, all he would have had to do was to publish Stalin's secret archives. Instead of that he confined himself to the selection of certain letters by Lenin and Krupskaya, to give himself the halo of Leninist orthodoxy.

If one considers how Khrushchev in the same speech bows before the "great achievements" of Stalin's industrialisation and

collectivisation of the country, and how he thus affirms all the Stalinist brutalities against the people; if one further remembers that Khrushchev and his collaborators stepped over the corpses of Beria and his adherents to power in liquidating them after Stalinist fashion, and that they still do not feel the slightest embarrassment at liquidating physically all opposition when, as in Hungary, circumstances so demand it—what remains then of Khrushchev's criticism of Stalin? No sign of an earnest break with the past, which the "Russia specialists" pretended to have detected in his speech, can be found in Khrushchev's empty talk. For his audience, the delegates, who were well acquainted with Russian everyday life, Khrushchev's revelations were old and well-known facts. The novelty lay merely in hearing the highest official authority declare openly what still yesterday people dared tell each other only in whispers and at the risk of imprisonment. With his speech on the Party Congress, Khrushchev gave the Russian people to understand that with totalitarian methods alone the régime could not go on ruling and that it was prepared to make concessions to the growing opposition in the country.

3. The War Delivers the Death Blow to Stalin's Terror.

Stalin's rule which just before the war had reached its climax of brutality and despotism never recovered from the shocks received during the war. A régime that was so deeply hated by the whole people and that had purged all spheres of social life, replacing the trained intelligentsia by complaisant charlatans, could not withstand the assault of the enemy armies. The amazing successes of the German armies at the outbreak of the war were due to the absolute unwillingness of the Russian people to fight. They saw in the war a welcome opportunity to get rid of the hated State-slavery. After a few weeks, the military equipment squeezed out of the sweat and blood of the Russian people for many years, was a useless heap of scrap. The continuation of the war would have been impossible without the aid of the Russian winter, not taken into account by Hitler, the arms supplies of the allies and above all the resistance of the Russian people, who through bitter experience awakened to the fact that from Hitler not liberation but only the most brutal terror, even surpassing Stalin's terror, and national oppression, were to be expected.

The war could not, however, be conducted under the old propaganda slogans of workers' rule and socialism, these slogans disappeared overnight and were replaced by a nationalist propaganda retrieved from the Czarist arsenals.

The Stalinist régime was on the defensive—never before had the bureaucracy, the party and the secret police been so powerless—the initiative went over to energetic and helpful soldiers who looked down with contempt upon the shirkers of the Stalinist bureaucracy.

The war not only demonstrated the impotence of the system built by Stalin, it also brought wide layers of the people, for the first time, in contact with foreign countries and showed them how much higher their living standard was than Russia's. The Russian people obviously

did not want to return after the war to the old slavery, but hoped for a better and freer future; and they thought their hopes confirmed by Russia's signature to the Atlantic Charter.

At the end of the war, Stalin saw himself faced by this state of affairs, but he did not, of course, dream of fulfilling the hopes of the Russian people. This the Russian state-capitalistic forced labour system cannot do without giving up its own existence. Such a system could only start reconstructing the terribly war damaged economy if the State, by political pressure, could maintain forced labour in factories and collectives and slave labour in the camps.

The West assisted Stalin energetically in his efforts to regain the power which had been sliding out of his hands. Eastern Europe and half of Germany were handed over to Stalin whose task was to keep these countries down, and the plunder of which helped the Stalinist economy back on its feet.

Hundreds of thousands of Russian prisoners of war who did not want to return home were forcibly repatriated by the Allies, and, on the pretext that their imprisonment was proof of their collaboration with the enemy, were sent to slave labour camps.

Yet, in the long run, all this was of no avail. The newly acquired territories soon became a heavy political burden for the régime, seats of unrest and centres of political resistance. The morale of the Russian occupation troops in these countries is constantly undermined and on their return home to Russia they carry with them the seeds of political resistance and the news of the incomparably higher living standards in the occupied and oppressed countries.

4. Russia's Post-war Problems.

The situation in Russia itself was not at all favourable to the régime. The Ukraine had been for years in a state of more or less open resistance. The old methods of political oppression, the transplantation and deportation of whole peoples reached its limits. The enormous losses during the war years and during the preceding period of Stalinist terror had led to a shortage of labour power which could no longer be created "artificially" as in the times of collectivisation. Even inmates of the slave-camps had, from now on, to be treated humanely.

Brigitte Gerland and Dr. Scholmer have described how the amelioration in the economic conditions of the camp inmates led to an awakening of the political life in the camps.

The camps became high schools of Politics as once the Czarist prisons and places of exile had been. There, only, in Russia could free and open political discussions be held. When the slave revolt of Vorkuta startled the country and the whole world, it was self-evident that the fate of despotism in Russia was sealed. Vorkuta was only the beginning; the camp-revolt spread over the whole of Russia. The managers of the Russian factories also had to compete for labour-power. The Russian workers' craving for better living conditions put its stamp on the economy.

Stalin apparently intended to counteract this situation with new great purges; the imprisonment of the doctors was obviously conceived as the inauguration of a new terror wave. The death of Stalin, almost too timely to be entirely due to natural causes, spared the country this ordeal. Stalin's policy was not officially renounced by his successors; but by their measures they indicated their intention of following a different course of government. The amnesty of the Malenkov Government liberated thousands from camps and prisons, and the Russian citizen, moreover, was promised the guarantee of his safety by law. The liquidation of Beria and his adherents and the curtailment of the power of the State secret police gave these promises a certain degree of reality.

The new rulers called criticism desirable, and the spirit of criticism, which had vegetated underground for so long, began to apply itself eagerly to such fields as literature, music, education, economy, etc.—indeed it became so lively that the rulers soon tried to stem the flood of criticism. But after the sluices had been opened, the flood could not be held back. The fall of Malenkov, who curried favour with the people by the development of consumer goods industries, could not reverse this process.

Russia's rulers face a dilemma. After decades of state-capitalist planning the yield of Russian agriculture is even below that of Czarist Russia; and industry, which has been developed disproportionately, with the stress on the essentially useless armament and heavy industries, has, during the many years of State planning, had no concern for the needs of the people. Further development is only possible if stress is laid more on light industry and consumer goods. Yet in the heavy industry, completely alienated from the people, lie the roots of power of the rulers in the Kremlin. Each endeavour to correct the industrial disproportions, of necessity undermines the power of the government—and yet it has no option but to make concessions to the demands of the people and the economy.

Four years of vacillating governmental policy brought about by that dilemma, have resulted in tangible improvements for the Russian people. The standard of living, still one of the lowest in Europe, has somewhat risen. Political pressure has been relaxed. The slave camps are in process of dissolution and are being replaced by conscript labour. Criticism, although not permitted in matters political, has given some colour to the monotonous grey of the Press, and also begins to stir in literature. In all spheres of social life a certain "humanisation" is making itself felt—totalitarianism is not quite as totalitarian as it used to be. The situation in Russia is favourable to all progressive aspirations, and one may look hopefully into the future.

10th June, 1957.

Paul Ecker

FEELING OF DEPRESSION

(Scene: Cabinet room of the White House. The curtain rises to disclose the President and cabinet members gathered around the conference table.)

President: We're almost ready to begin. Where's the Secretary of Labor?

Sec. of Defense: He's still looking for that average citizen. He's had the devil of a time. Thought he finally had him—five feet, eight and two thirds inches tall, 165 pounds, two and three quarter children, owns a 1954 car, salary \$4,785.23 a year (right on the button!)—and then he found out the guy owns only one television set. Had to start out from scratch.

President: Only one television set! How does he get bi-optic reception on my reports to the nation?

Sec. of Commerce: We're taking care of that. There's a full FCC investigation under way. But we couldn't wait for that. Had to look for someone else.

President: Aren't there any shortcuts? How about the FBI files?

Attorney General: We thought of that. But there's no one available to check them. All the agents are in the Communist Party undercover. We've finally done it!—they're about to elect J. Edgar national secretary.

President: Splendid! Splendid! But that doesn't help us solve our present problem. What's the Secretary of Labor doing?

Attorney General: He's got "Wanted" posters with pictures and complete description of the average citizen posted everywhere. Hourly broadcasts on radio and television. Gallup, Roper, Trendex making a house-by-house canvass. We'll come up with him.

President: It had better be soon. The stock market fell another five points this morning because that stupid Haggerty let it leak out that I had belched. Now I'll have to out and play another 36 holes to restore confidence.

Sec. of the Treasury: It's all right. The Federal Reserve Bank has lowered the rediscount rate another half per cent to counteract that report. We can offset anything short of another upset stomach. You didn't eat any of that Welsh rarebit for lunch again, did you?

Vice President: Let's stick to the subject. Once we find that average citizen, how is that going to help us end the depression? How is . . . ?

(General consternation. Everyone's face turns white. The President belches. The vice president is overcome by confusion.)

Vice President: That is . . . I'm sorry . . . I didn't realize . . . It slipped out without my thinking . . . I . . . I . . .

President (angrily): You've done it again! How many times have I told you never to use that word "dep—", er—ah, I mean, er—you

know what I mean! How many times have I told you not to use that word to describe our present sub-prosperous economic situation? How many points has the market dropped now, Mr. Commerce Secretary?

Sec. of Commerce (examining ticker tape): Another six points, Mr. President. There's a wave of selling.

President: There! What did I tell you! You've undermined confidence again. Now I'll have to make a half hour coast-to-coast telecast to restore optimism. If you must use strong language, you might at least satisfy yourself with "recession". And "readjustment" is quite proper, even in mixed company.

Vice President: I'm sorry. Really. I'll make up for it, I promise. I'll make another tour.

President: Please! The Voice broadcasts are still trying to overcome the effects of the last one. They've had to hire 25 additional broadcasters.

(At this point, the door opens and the Secretary of Labor enters, leading a bewildered-looking man, five feet, eight and two thirds inches tall, 165 pounds, pushing a baby carriage with his two and three quarter children. His 1954 car is parked outside with his two television sets.)

Sec. of Labor (enthusiastically): I've got him! I've got him! We had him spotted for three days but had to tail him until he bought his seventh necktie. Then we grabbed him. He's perfect!

President: Splendid! Splendid! He's the average citizen all right—look at that bald head, that fatherly expression, that set of golf clubs. Bet he's had a heart attack. Where did you find him?

Sec. of Labor: On an unemployment compensation line, of course. Where else would you look for an average citizen?

President: Hmmm. Very good. You'll be rewarded for that—come up here and sit on my right. Now . . . to get down to business, if you'll pardon the expression. We'll find out what's wrong with the economy by going to the grass roots. Tell me, my good man—why aren't you buying any more automobiles, washing machines, refrigerators, yachts?

Average Citizen: I've already got an automobile, a washing machine and a refrigerator. And I live in the middle of the Mojave Desert, so I don't have much need of a yacht, begging your pardon.

Sec. of Commerce: There! What did I tell you! Shortsighted penny-pinching. Haven't you ever heard of enlightened self interest, my good man? Buying a yacht is an investment in America, an investment in prosperity, an investment in YOURSELF! My God, man, where's your social responsibility? The automobile factories are standing idle in Detroit, the shipyards are empty in Boston, the steel mills are cold in Pittsburgh, millions of people are out of work, and YOU answer that you don't need a yacht. Why when you go out and buy a yacht, you're giving work to 15 lumberjacks, 3 steelworkers, 2 glass makers, 10 shipbuilders, 75 salesmen. They're all out of work because of YOU. Can't you see those empty dinner plates, those pinched faces around the supper table, those unpaid instalments? Where's your humanity man? What conceivable reason can you have for not buying a yacht?

Average Citizen: Begging your pardon again, sir, but I don't have the money.

Sec. of Commerce: What do you mean, "you don't have the money"? Haven't you ever heard of a bank, a finance company, a loan shark? What do you think they're for? Do you want to put THEM out of business, too? Now you're tinkering with our credit structure. Why, if nobody borrowed from the banks, they'd all close down, and you and I would lose all our money and—

Average Citizen: I don't have any. I spent it all after the President's last speech.

Sec. of Commerce: Don't interrupt! You can at least have manners if you haven't got any economic sense.

President: Now, now—let's not bully him. Tell me, my good man, can you offer us one good reason why you haven't gone out and bought that yacht on time payments?

Average Citizen: Well, you see, I still have 140 easy monthly payments to make on the car, 125 on the second television set—(proudly) the first is almost paid for—79 on the washing machine and—

President: Why splendid! Your credit is excellent. With that kind of a record, I don't see why you should have any trouble financing a trifle such as a yacht.

Average Citizen: I know. And don't think it's because we wouldn't have any money left for food or rent. We're getting our groceries by cashing in the trading stamps we receive with the appliances and the landlord has agreed to take a second chattel mortgage on all of the stuff we've bought in place of the rent, so everything was just fine until I got cut down to 72 hours a week and the wife and kids got laid off. Even then we managed to meet the car payments by renting it out as a taxi and the television payments by charging the neighbors for watching ours (they lost theirs to the finance company, poor devils, and after making 223 payments) but then I got laid off, too, and now we're a little hard-pressed, begging your pardon (*hurriedly*). It's not that the unemployment compensation isn't enough, you understand—it pays my car fare to and from the claims office with enough left over so I can buy the newspaper to read the "help wanted" ads—but we just don't feel that this is exactly the right time to buy a yacht.

Sec. of Labor: But that's just where you're wrong. That's just why it IS exactly the time to buy a yacht. How else are we going to get business going again unless people like you (*pointing an accusing finger*) realize your responsibilities, put your shoulder to the wheel and push? (*To stenographer*): That's pretty good. Jot that down. Why, do you realize that there's an unsold inventory of 713,356 yachts at the present time? Fundamentally, it's up to people like you to get the economic ball rolling. (*To stenographer*): Get that one, too.

President: Yes, my good man. You realize, don't you, that this is a people's capitalism. That means it's up to the people to keep the system going. Don't you own any stock?

Average Citizen: Well, yes, I do own five shares. Our company

gave them to us instead of a Christmas bonus just before it went out of business.

President: There! What did I tell you! You have a stake in the economy, my boy. There's no basic difference between you and Charlie Wilson, Henry Ford or DuPont—they just own a few more shares. But you, too, can get to the top. Guard your investment carefully, manipulate your stock wisely and you'll see it grow and grow. How much is it worth now?

Average Citizen: Nothing.

President: There! It can't help but go up. Just hold on to it and don't sell. And tell me, have you any defense bonds?

Average Citizen: No, I sold them all after your last speech. The one where you said to go out and buy what I needed.

President: Yes—and what did you buy?

Average Citizen: I bought 20 parachutes. I guess I didn't really need them, but that was the night the Air Force was using subliminal projection during your speech and—

President: Mister Defense Secretary! I warned you against that.

Sec. of Defense: But we had to get rid of all those parachutes. They were cluttering up all the guided missile sites, and one night they put a carton on a launching pad by mistake. It's still in orbit.

President: I know. But I told you to get rid of them through the Army and Navy stores. Give a shot in the arm to retail merchandising.

Sec. of Defense: We tried. But the Russians started selling their old Stalin tanks at the same time and we couldn't meet the competition. They were offering atomic warheads for their trading stamps. Damn things wouldn't go off, but nobody found out about it until that damnfool plumbing tycoon out in Wisconsin tried to use one against a picket line.

Sec. of Treasury: I'm sorry to hear you sold your defense bonds, my good fellow. What's happened to the old-fashioned virtues on which this country became great: Thrift, abstinence, the postponement of gratification? Now its just spend, spend, spend. Do you want to put the banks out of business? Do you want another bank holiday?

Average Citizen: But how can I save my money and spend it at the same time?

Sec. of Treasury: Ah, there's the beauty of it. You can! You deposit your money in the bank at three per cent and borrow it back at six. That's the way we keep the wheels of business turning.

Sec. of Defense: And your defense bonds! Do you want to bankrupt the government? How do you think we are maintaining our national defense effort, manning the ramparts of freedom. How do you think we pay for the guided missiles, the H-bomb tests?

President: A little order, please. We're wandering far afield. Our main purpose in inviting you here, my good man, was to find out what we should do to halt the—er—present retrograde economic development. This is a people's capitalism, you know, and that means it's the people's responsibility to get us out of this. What do you advise?

Average Citizen: Well, I'd advise that we all pull together to get out of this. That we put our shoulder to the wheel and our nose to the grindstone and . . .

President: Yes, yes, I know. What else?

Average Citizen: I think we should stop being pessimistic, realize that business has never been better and that prosperity is just . . .

President (impatiently): Can't you be a little more specific?

Average Citizen: Sure. Stop saving. Start spending. Buy a share of prosperity. You auto buy now. Spend, buy, borrow . . .

President: Get that man out of here! Take him away! Give him a seat in Congress! Get me a bromide—effervescent, that is.

(Average Citizen, still reciting recipes for recovery, is hustled from the room. Stock market ticker tape announces another five-point drop on news of the President's indisposition.)

Sec. of Labor: What will we do now?

President: Don't ask foolish questions. What do the latest unemployment figures show?

Sec. of Labor: The rate of increase has decreased for the seventh month in a row. Last month it went up two million; this month it's up only a million and a half.

President: Splendid! Issue another optimistic statement and get me my golf clubs. And see that those businessmen are scraped off the sidewalk as fast as they jump. We've got to restore confidence.

(Exeunt omnia, singing administration theme song, "Take Me Out to the Golf Course".)

CIRCUS.

ROUNDAABOUT.

There are a few sceptics on the sidelines, who, after the pseudo-religious capers of the last three weeks, think the West would be well advised to split hairs and dance on a pin point until September 15, when the authority of the new President of the Lebanon would be unquestioned and it would be possible for the United States to appear before the regular Assembly with the clean declaration that the United States Marines had departed in order and in glory.

But the pressure of righteousness is against it. And Mr. Sobolev, in particular, seems to be haunted by the fear that they may be home before he can get to an Assembly to condemn their intrusion.

(Manchester Guardian, 7th August, 1958.)

TURNABOUT.

The Agenda for the talks here was "up to Nasser" Mr. Murphy said. Egyptian reporters pressed him to explain why more United States troops were continuing to pour into Lebanon if they were soon to be withdrawn.

He replied: "This is largely a question of troops' rotation and movements because in military operation it is a little difficult to slow downflow once the pipeline is started."

(Daily Telegraph, 6th August, 1958.)

Was it Shepilov who claimed, during the second invasion of Hungary, that this was being done to facilitate "withdrawal" of Russian troops—from Hungary?

John Ball

SOME COMMENTS ON 20th CENTURY POETRY

The novel is a mirror on a broad road. At times it reflects the blue sky, at other times the mud, the puddles, the bumps, and you accuse the man who holds the mirror of lacking taste. The mirror reflects mud, and you blame the mirror. You would do better to blame the road with its bumps on the highway department.

—Stendhal

At the moment when one writes, one is what one is, and the damage of a lifetime, and of having been born into an unsettled society, cannot be repaired at the moment of composition.

—T. S. Eliot

Martha Millet's article *The New Priests of Poetry* (*Contemporary Issues*, No. 32) is a polemic directed against "modern poetry". Now, it is surely convenient to place all the poetry (or for that matter all intellectual production) of our century on a Procrustean bed in order to stretch fact so as to fit a preconceived theoretical framework. One then has a formula which can be applied mechanically to give an all-inclusive condemnation: *worthless, inferior!* But, attractive as this point of view is, it is nonetheless grossly over-simplified; to hold it is to sidestep the responsibility of taking a measured and critical attitude in order to weigh the virtues and faults of poetry today.

Mrs. Millet supports her attack by citing the misanthropic philosophy and religiosity which she claims characterizes modern poetry and by maintaining that, through this world outlook, modern poets actively support and spread reaction. She also comments on the obscurantism and "bogus scholarship" of contemporary critics and poets. But her ideas are ambiguous and hard to pin down. Even her title, *The New Priests of Poetry*, is ambiguous. Who are the "priests"? The poets or the critics? Is she principally concerned with poetry or with the views of the poets on various social and political questions? It is interesting in this connection that in her entire article Mrs. Millet does not quote so much as a single line of poetry! And of her most frequently quoted critic, she says "but into the poetry as such, Williamson barely delves". And with just which poets is she concerned? Only two important poets, Eliot and Pound, are attacked by name. None of their poetry is quoted; only commentaries on their poetry by a number of critics. But, by no stretch of the imagination can either Eliot or Pound be considered "new".

Mrs. Millet speaks of "our enshrined elite of poetry", whose world view she describes for us as follows:

The world, as they see it, is composed of chaotic, mutually repellant and destructive *particles*, engaged in miseries not nearly as vivid or compelling as those of the damned in hell. Men are devoid of will, aim, or direction. Their only hope of contact with one another is through an agent, a third party "above", which, of course, is God—a God in their image.

While Mrs. Millet never specifies just who constitutes this "enshrined elite of poetry", this paragraph does sum up the world view of T. S. Eliot. Is this view a correct one? As a matter of fact, the world of "destructive *particles*", alienated from each other and following out, in competition, mutually destructive paths is not only the world "as they see it", but the world as it is; not the whole world as it must be immutably, but the world as it is today. For those of us who do not accept God as a way out, Eliot can be a guide through Inferno; for Purgatorio and Paradiso, we may choose more suitable guides.

However, what must be considered in evaluating the work of a poet is not the views which he holds on various questions, but rather the poetry which he has produced. A poet who is a fine craftsman, who is sensitive to the world, and who is honest in recording his reactions to it, cannot help but portray certain elements of reality, including social reality. If it were not for such fragments of insight into *la condition humaine*, we would find it difficult to reach back through the centuries and communicate with artists of disparate views and cultures.

How remarkable that Mrs. Millet does not feel the need to refer to a single line of poetry in her critique! Indeed, to imply from Eliot's reactionary outlook that his poetry must be bad is to accept the philosophy (though not necessarily the bullets) of Zhdanovism, the totalitarian control of art practised in Stalinist and fascist countries. Zhdanovism evaluates art *solely* on the basis of its usefulness to the State, *solely* in terms of its political utility. But in fact one does not have to share a poet's religion, philosophy, politics, etc., in order to understand and appreciate his poetry. Richard Crashaw's lines "O thou undaunted daughter of desires! / By all thy dower of lights and fires; / By all the eagle in thee, all the dove . . ." or Gerard Manley Hopkins' poem "The Windhover" do not require the reader to be religious for their effectiveness. Andrew Marvell's *Horatian Ode upon Cromwell's Return from Ireland* with its unmistakable Bonapartist overtones is nevertheless a very fine poem. It is possible to hold the most diverse views on a multitude of questions and write great poems.

An indication of the lack of precision that runs through Mrs. Millet's article is the astonishing fact that she never explicitly defines the poetry that she is criticizing. Although no poets not in the school of Eliot, Pound, and Tate are even mentioned, the lack of qualifications in Mrs. Millet's criticism leads one to believe that her critique is directed against all poetry written in our century. And

yet a list of only a few of the better known English and American poets who have written since the turn of the century would have to include: William Butler Yeats, Robert Frost, W. H. Auden, Marianne Moore, Dylan Thomas, Richard Wilbur, E. E. Cummings, Robert Bridges, Ralph Hodgson, Hugh MacDiarmid, Kenneth Rexroth, none of whom could in any sense be called "in the school of Eliot".¹ Among the poets on this list, Yeats must rank as one of the greatest poets to write in English since the seventeenth century. That his poetry exists is sufficient to dismiss any blanket condemnation of the poetry of our age. The following short lyric is a masterpiece of its kind:

The Lover's Song

Bird sighs for the air,
Thought for I know not where,
For the womb the seed sighs.
Now sinks the same rest
On mind, on nest,
On straining thighs.

It is difficult to think of a general criticism that applies equally to Eliot and to all the others just mentioned. It is difficult to say anything at all about them collectively, except that they have all written well. Can Robert Frost be accused of perversion? Do Dylan Thomas or Marianne Moore lack "a certain high joy in living"? Here is an example of Miss Moore's lovely nature poetry, from *The Jerboa*:

. . . It

honours the sand by assuming its color;
closed paws seeming one with the fur
in its flight from a danger.

By fifths and sevenths,
in leaps of two lengths,
like the uneven note
of the Bedouin flute, it stops its gleaning
on little wheel castors, and makes fern-seed
foot-prints with kangaroo speed.

Its leaps should be set
to the flageolet;
pillar body erect
on a three-cornered smooth-working Chippendale
claw—propped on hind legs, and tail as third toe,
between leaps to its burrow.

Of course, it is possible that Mrs. Millet intended to criticize only one school of modern poetry. But in that case, she has no business speaking of "The New Priests of Poetry" without carefully qualifying

1. This list does not even mention any poet who did not write in English; foreign poets are even more diverse in subject and style.

her words. What she has done, in fact, is to make generalized remarks about modern poetry on the basis of a critique of one tendency.

If Mrs. Millet is so dissatisfied with what modern poets write, one might well ask: what would she have the poet write? Perhaps the answer is to be found in the book of poems—*The Rosenbergs: Poems of the United States* (Sierra Press, New York, 1957, unpagged, \$3.00) edited by Mrs. Millet. Let us consider one of the poems in this volume, quite typical of the rest. It is called *The Rosenberg Cantata*, and it was written by Michael Gold. "History" speaks:

The stench of a dying world
Poisons the streets and homes the schools and courtrooms
Imperialist decay rots the young promises of America
Yet slowly a miracle deeply stirs.
The world can never end.

Consider the first three lines as a diagnosis and portrayal of the human condition. What *feeling* is there in those lines? They bring nothing to the hearts of their readers, and make only the shallowest pretence of reaching their minds. And the lines which follow are actually full of despair in their made-to-order, mechanical, cliché-ridden empty "optimism". The only thing this passage has in common with poetry is that each line begins with a capital letter. Now consider Gold's treatment of individual human emotion:

The Children

Mummy and Daddy please come home
The house is so lonesome.

Ethel

We'll be home in the spring
With the flowers and joyful birds
Wait for us darlings!

The Children

Daddy and Mummy does it hurt
To die in an electric chair?

Here we have brave mother and frightened children in the usual frieze. These are the merest tag ends of pathos, bells rung in the hope that our eyes will salivate. Is this the optimism and health which Mrs. Millet demands? It is an *unreflecting* optimism; it is the assertion that things will get better—in this case by means of a miracle. And the healthy personal relationships are dearly purchased too—their price is a series of clichés. In his rush to be healthy, Gold has left reality far behind, and entered a world of stereotypes. All in all, Gold's poem is completely dehumanized. The formal mechanisms as well are the most banal imaginable. Is this the sort of poetry which Mrs. Millet would have us accept as the modern counterpart of that of "the bards of old . . . who stirred up their listeners . . . gave them fierce knowledge, and hearty laughter"?

As has already been emphasized, Martha Millet's critique of modern poetry deals almost exclusively with T. S. Eliot. Here are some lines by Eliot himself:

At the violet hour, when the eyes and back
Turn upward from the desk, when the human engine waits
Like a taxi throbbing waiting,
I Tiresias, though blind, throbbing between two lives,
Old man with wrinkled female breasts, can see
At the violet hour, the evening sun that strives
Homeward, and brings the sailor home from sea,
The typist home at teatime, clears her breakfast, lights
Her stove, and lays out food in tins.
Out of the window perilously spread
Her drying combinations touched by the sun's last rays,
On the divan are piled (at night her bed)
Stockings, slippers, camisoles, and stays.
I Tiresias, old man with wrinkled dugs
Perceived the scene, and foretold the rest—
I too awaited the expected guest.
He, the young man carbuncular, arrives,
A small house agent's clerk, with one bold stare,
One of the low on whom assurance sits
As a silk hat on a Bradford millionaire.
The time is now propitious, as he guesses,
The meal is ended, she is bored and tired,
Endeavours to engage her in caresses
Which still are unreproved, if undesired.
Flushed and decided, he assaults at once;
Exploring hands encounter no defence;
His vanity requires no response,
And makes a welcome of indifference.
(And I Tiresias have foresuffered all
Enacted on this same divan or bed;
I who have sat by Thebes below the wall
And walked among the lowest of the dead.)
Bestows one final patronizing kiss,
And gropes his way, finding the stairs unlit . . .

She turns and looks a moment in the glass
Hardly aware of her departed lover;
Her brain allows one half-formed thought to pass:
"Well now that's done: and I'm glad it's over."
When lovely woman stoops to folly and
Paces about her room again, alone,
She smooths her hair with automatic hand,
And puts a record on the gramophone.

These lines are from *The Wasteland*, by T. S. Eliot, and they certainly do not exhibit what Mrs. Millet calls, through the pen of Robert Louis Stevenson, "a certain high joy in living". They do not display "a wholesome meaning . . . in the relation . . . between

men and women". And yet they describe something about modern life that everyone, including Mrs. Millet, knows is true. We live in a world in which, *on the whole*, sex does not have a wholesome meaning. Is it possible for sex to have a healthy meaning, perhaps in another society? The poem simply does not say. Mrs. Millet quotes George Williamson² quoting T. S. Eliot on Baudelaire—"that the sexual act as evil is more dignified, less boring, than as the natural 'life-giving' cheery automatism of the modern world". I do not know the passage from Eliot, but it seems obviously satiric: "life-giving" is even written with quotation marks. The key word in the passage, completely ignored by Mrs. Millet, is *automatism*. Even the belief in Original Sin to which Eliot has undoubtedly retreated has at least this to be said for it: it elevates Man to a position of dignity, albeit tragic dignity. He is worthy to play a major part in a drama of universal significance. He is higher than a machine. He is not an automaton. However, the social significance of accepting a doctrine such as Original Sin must not be forgotten. Such acceptance absolves one from the necessity for struggle in *this world*. Given the objective bleakness, some such dogma is an "easy" one to acquiesce in—especially when it means that one then has a ready-made rationale for standing aside from participation in the struggle to change the world. Eliot's early poetry (of which the above lines are an example), written when he was as yet "uncommitted" to a specific religious doctrine portray the world with greater objectivity than some of his later work.

But what is of interest in Eliot's poetry is by no means limited to the subject of the bleakness of modern life. Eliot has written some of the most eloquent unrhymed verse in English since the 17th century, verse which is at once *pertinent* and expert. *Murder in the Cathedral* is an authentic masterpiece: the first *actable* philosophical drama since the Greeks (except for "Everyman", on which its versification is modeled). The deep anguish of modern alienation is summed up in the cry of *Sweeney Agonistes*: "But I've gotta use words when I talk to you". Here is a poem that contains a more profound social criticism than any of the explicitly political productions in the book edited by Mrs. Millet. The esthetic goal of modern poetry—which is also the traditional goal of great poetry—is forcefully summed up by Eliot in *Little Gidding*, one of the *Four Quartets*:

. . . And every phrase
And sentence that is right (where every word is at home,
Taking its place to support the others,
The word neither diffident nor ostentatious,
An easy commerce of the old and new,
The common word exact without vulgarity,
The formal word precise but not pedantic,
The complete consort dancing together) . . .

2. I might add that the passages quoted from Williamson in her article seem to be examples of modern criticism at its worst, intent upon loading poems with Myths until they sink.

Eliot's poems are not exactly Rabelaisian (take "Eating and drinking. Dung and death" from the Quartet *East Coker*). But when Mrs. Millet says that the Quartets present an "all permeating desire to avoid struggle and learning from life" she is simply wrong. In fact, her strictures appear directly underneath another phrase from *East Coker* quoted by the critic George Williamson: "For us, there is only the *trying*." (Emphasis mine.) One main theme of the poems is the necessity of continuing the struggle in spite of all setbacks and in spite of the reality of death:

. . . And right action is freedom
 From past and future also.
 For most of us, this is the aim
 Never here to be realized;
 Who are only undefeated
 Because we have gone on trying;
 We, content at the last
 If our temporal reversion nourish
 (Not too far from the yew-tree)
 The life of significant toil.

[*The Dry Salvages*]

Great as has been Eliot's influence as a poet, his influence as a critic may very well be greater. And here for all the exaggerations and deep provincialism of the "new critics", his influence has been in many ways a healthy one.³ It is Eliot who has helped to revive the reputation of poets of the classical period such as Pope and Dryden after a century of neglect—not to mention his appreciation of Donne and the Elizabethans. And if the deflation of the Romantics has gone too far, that is perhaps the inevitable reaction to the excesses⁴ of their reign. Martha Millet may be unhappy about this particular change of taste, but I think it would be most regrettable if through her advocacy, the mediocre Whitman became a substitute criterion. Whitman tells one how to feel instead of *evoking* the feeling:

O resistless restless race
 O beloved race in all! O my breast aches with tender love for all!
 O I mourn and yet exult, I am rapt with love for all,
 Pioneers! O pioneers.

3. As S. J. Wyndham, in his fine article "T. S. Eliot as Critic" (*Contemporary Issues*, No. 2), says of Eliot's approach as a critic of literature: "... it has contributed a wealth of textual analysis, rediscovered for us very fine poets, established unsuspected literary links between various poets, improved our taste as readers. . . . His method and prose presentation reduce the distance between the poem and the mind. He involves us in a process in which we grow into the poem—or very nearly."

4. These excesses of the Romantics include: An increasing vagueness of speech ("Pinnacled dim in the intense inane"), the inclination of sex toward perversions, in particular masochism (*La Belle Dame Sans Merci*, *Dolores Our Lady of Pain*), morbidity ("Now more than ever seems it sweet to die"), a turning away of the poet from everyday life (the abundance of mythological and allegorical poems especially among the later Romantics)—these developments are documented in *The Romantic Agony* by Mario Praz, Meridian Books. And, perhaps most important of all, there was the loss of a sense of humor.

Compare this with the following lines by Eliot (Prelude II):

The morning comes to consciousness
Of faint stale smells of beer
From the sawdust-trampled street
With all its muddy feet that press
To early coffee-stands.
With the other masquerades
That time resumes,
One thinks of all the hands
That are raising dingy shades
In a thousand furnished rooms.

This contrast exemplifies what Eliot had in mind when he wrote:

The only way of expressing emotion in the form of art (for example the art of poetry) is by finding an "objective correlative", in other words, a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that *particular* emotion; such that when the external facts, which must terminate in sensory experience, are given, the emotion is immediately evoked.⁵

Eliot has also helped to bring about a renewed emphasis on form which has, especially in the last 30 years, become dominant among the modern poets; even in ways Eliot probably did not have in mind. Subtle experiments in meter and rhyme, going far beyond the daring of the Elizabethan and 17th-century poets but recognizably in their tradition, have improved the *technique* of poetry to an unheard-of extent. (Of course, this is not to say that the result will necessarily be better poetry.) Compare these two pleasing poems:

Bethsabe Bathing

Hot sun, cool fire, tempered with sweet air,
Black shade, fair nurse, shadow my white hair:
Shine, sun; burn fire; breathe, air, and ease me;
Shine, sun; burn fire; breathe, air, and ease me.

Shadow, my sweet nurse, keep me from burning,
Make not my glad cause cause of mourning.

Let not my beauty's fire
Inflame unstaid desire,
Nor pierce any bright eye
That wand'reth lightly.

—from *David and Bethsabe*, by George Peele (1594)

Gardener Janus Catches a Naiad

Baskets of ripe fruit in air
The bird-songs seem suspended where

Between the hairy leaves trills dew
All tasting of fresh green anew.

5. T. S. Eliot, *Selected Essays*, Harcourt Brace and Co., 1932, 124.

Ma'am, I've heard your laughter flare
Through your waspish-gilded hair:

Feathered masks,
Pots of peas,—
Janus asks
Nought of these,
Creaking water
Brightly striped
Now I've caught her—
Shrieking biped.
Flute sounds jump
And turn together,
Changing clumps
Of glassy feather.
In among the Pots of peas
Naïad changes—
Quick as these.

—by Dame Edith Sitwell

Ezra Pound stands with Eliot as an innovator who helped to deliver English poetry from the puerilities of the Georgian period. Although Pound has serious defects, he has several indisputable merits, which are also merits of modern poetry. He has played a very large rôle in revitalizing the art of translation. Lattimore's *Iliad*, Humphries' Ovid, Wilbur's Molière, Marianne Moore's *La Fontaine*, Fitts' and Fitzgerald's Greek dramas, Rexroth's Chinese and Japanese poems, are all in Pound's tradition. And for the first time since the Elizabethans the literature of other nations and periods is made available to us in versions which speak the language of our own time without losing sight of the social and stylistic differences between us and their authors. Among modern translators, there has been a real faithfulness to the original text; although in a few instances, too much "modernity" (i.e., inappropriate slang, solecisms, anachronisms) has marred the translation. However, Homer is not made into Pope, nor Euripides into Gilbert Murray.

Pound has as much as anyone led the fight for clear, precise language in poetry. What is clear, precise language? In order to illustrate what is involved, let us examine some lines by Swinburne, in which the language is neither clear nor precise:

Shall I strew on thee rose or rue or laurel,
Brother, on this that was the veil of thee?
Or quiet sea-flower moulded by the sea,
Or simplest growth of meadow-sweet or sorrel,
Such as the summer-sleepy dryads weave,
Waked up by snow-soft sudden rains at eve?
Or wilt thou rather, as on earth before,
Half-faded fiery blossoms, pale with heat
And full of bitter summer, but more sweet
To thee than gleanings of a northern shore
Trod by no tropic feet?

The ornate and artificially "poetic" diction is quite striking. But unless one is very familiar with these lines, one can scarcely have more than a vague idea of what they say. Now consider a translation, by Pound, from the Chinese poet Rihaku. It is the often-anthologized *River Merchant's Wife: a Letter*:

While my hair was still cut straight across my forehead
I played about the front gate, pulling flowers.
You came by on bamboo stilts, playing horse,
And we went on living in the village of Chokan:
Two small people without dislike or suspicion.

At fourteen I married My Lord you.
I never laughed, being bashful.
Lowering my head, I looked at the wall.
Called to, a thousand times, I never looked back.

At fifteen I stopped scowling,
I desired my dust to be mingled with yours
Forever and forever and forever.
Why should I climb the lookout?

At sixteen you departed,
You went into far Ku-to-yen, by the river of swirling eddies,
And you have been gone five months.
The monkeys make sorrowful noise overhead.
You dragged your feet when you went out.
By the gate now, the moss is grown, the different mosses,
Too deep to clear them away!
The leaves fall early this autumn, in wind.
The paired butterflies are already yellow with August
Over the grass in the West garden;
They hurt me. I grow older.
If you are coming down through the narrows of the river Kiang,
Please let me know beforehand,
And I will come out to meet you
As far as Cho-fu-sa.

Pound's attitude toward language in poetry may be summed up in his aphorism: "Poetry must be *as well written as prose*." The poets of the 20th century reached out for new forms and new styles able to express the complicated attitude toward the new age of men and women who whatever anyone says are as sensitive as any, and who, unlike some of us, have no ready answers to the problems they face. And also they sought and sometimes found a new integration of the common speech into the framework of their art—that quality which makes the Elizabethans so delightful. They turned to the everyday world around them. In this respect they inherited the best traditions of early Romanticism, which had been abandoned in England as the loveliness of common nature was destroyed. Wordsworth, an innovator in his time, expressed one of his poetic aims

in the preface to the second edition of the *Lyrical Ballads* (1800) as follows: "My purpose was to imitate, and, as far as possible, to adopt the very language of men . . . to bring my language nearer to the language of men . . .". Today when we read Wordsworth, we are conscious of much artificiality in his poetic diction. Still, at the time, Wordsworth's poetry did represent a step towards a more fruitful exploration of natural language for poetic purposes and towards concreteness and precision of speech in poetry. However, his contributions in this direction were largely by-passed in the later 19th and early 20th centuries. In the same way as the early Romantics revolted against the formalized language of 18th-century poetry, so the poets of Eliot and Pound's generation revolted against the high-flown language of late 19th and early 20th-century poetry. Their achievement is all the more remarkable when one considers that the spoken English of our day lacks the richness of the Elizabethan period. It is a distinct credit to much of modern poetry that it incorporates precisely and beautifully a great deal of the language, and its rhythms, as they appear today.

The following lines illustrate not only this, but the presence in modern poetry at its most serious of a lightness and delicacy of touch that add to the eloquence. The poem is *In Memory of Sigmund Freud*, by W. H. Auden.

... All that he did was to remember
Like the old and be honest like children.

He wasn't clever at all: he merely told
The unhappy Present to recite the Past
Like a poetry lesson till sooner
Or later it faltered at the line where

Long ago the accusations had begun,
And suddenly knew by whom it had been judged,
How rich life had been and how silly,
And was life-forgiven and more humble.

Able to approach the future as a friend
Without a wardrobe of excuses, without
A set mask of rectitude or an
Embarrassing over-familiar gesture. . . .

This is a distinctively modern and exciting note, refuting those who might say that what is good in our poetry is not new and what is new is not good. Nonetheless it is true that to this day no really successful poem has been written about machinery, with the exception of the celebrated chorus from the *Antigone* of Sophocles. It remains also for the future to produce a poetry of science that will in the highest sense justify the materialist view of the world and continue the work begun by Lucretius in *De Rerum Natura*.

The 20th century has seen subjectivism develop to the point where much poetry is chaotically obscure and disorganized in form. These

are really the two things most seriously wrong with many modern poems, and it is interesting that Mrs. Millet discusses neither. Her endorsement of Whitman makes it seem doubtful whether she believes that formlessness in poetry is a flaw. Of all the particularly recent developments in poetry, free verse, despite the fact that it can on occasion be effective, is the one that shows most clearly the influence of the decline in communication between poet and audience. For, free verse is the triumph within the very structure of poetry of the principle of subjectivism. The poem loses all objective structure and is required to satisfy no standards other than its author's needs or feelings.

For, what gives poetry its unique effectiveness? Why have poetry at all, when we can say anything we like in prose? Poetry is defined by the use of certain mnemonic devices: rime, alliteration, assonance, meter. If these devices had no other virtues they would at least enable us to remember poetry more easily than prose. In earlier ages, they were probably the embodiment of the social functions of poetry, its use in ritual chants and to accompany the rhythmic movements of associated labor. Furthermore, these devices are intrinsically beautiful, in the same sense than any harmonious structure gives pleasure by reason of its harmony.

But as poetry became an ever more subtle instrument, out of these devices another dimension developed. The contrast between the structure of the ideas in the poem and the structure of the poem itself became a sort of counterpoint that greatly increased the effect of the presentation. For example, considered simply as iambic pentameter, the accents fall thus in these lines from *Macbeth*:

Cancel and tear to pieces that great bond
Which keeps me pale! Light thickens, and the crow . . .

Considered in terms of their content, the stresses fall like this:

Cancel and tear to pieces that great bond
Which keeps me pale! Light thickens, and the crow . . .⁶

The regular iambic echo in the background emphasizes *Macbeth's* turbulent spirit.

When Mrs. Millet speaks of "the decline of communication between poet and audience", she is quite correct. In fact this "decline" is but one facet of the much noted general phenomenon of alienation of man from man which is characteristic of present-day society.

For the poet, this alienation manifests itself strikingly in the fact that the traditional audiences for poetry have disappeared. There

6. This illustration is taken from what is still the best introduction to modern poetry for the general reader, *A Hope for Poetry* by C. Day Lewis, London, Basil Blackwell.

have been great poetic ages, e.g., Periclean Athens and Elizabethan England, where serious art was really a part of the life of most people. There have been other great ages in our own and other societies where this was not the case. But, until relatively recently there has always existed a substantial body of generally cultivated people, not themselves professionally involved in art, to patronize, enjoy, criticize, and provide a milieu for the artist. Among the most important and subtlest functions which this group served was setting limits which would let the artist know how far he could experiment and still communicate effectively. Paintings were hung on the walls of this intelligentsia, they played the best music for their own enjoyment, and they wrote amateur poetry and read poetry aloud. In many cases too there was a lively folk art from which the more sophisticated artists could draw.

To-day, all of this is gone.⁷ The habit of reading poetry aloud is almost extinct. But, poetry that can be successfully read aloud is poetry that is not obscure and cold. Not only is there an incredibly tasteless, vulgar mass culture, but the ruling classes now are just as boorish as anybody else. There remains for the poet a peculiar sort of substitute audience—the university critics. Actually many of the poets who are writing today are themselves university critics. In the artificial world of the university critic what counts are the obscure allusions that give him a chance to display his pedantry, and the number of simply incoherent passages which, since they can be interpreted in any way whatsoever, give him free rein. On the other hand whether the poets are involved with their characters, whether their work provides the immediate unreflecting delight which is part of the effect of all of the greatest poetry, is of less concern to him. For, these elements cannot be so easily used in those papers which the critic must continually publish if he wishes to advance his career. The result is the modern poem, a luxury commodity produced for a set of highly specialized consumers.

A conspicuous feature of the work of the university poets and critics is an obvious lack of real criticism of the basic things which are wrong with the world. This lack gives the best of the academicians the appearance of knowing a good deal more than they say; and the worst of them, of course, the appearance of knowing nothing at all. What social criticism they do have in their poetry serves the objective rôle of siphoning off critical sentiment which could manifest itself in deeper criticisms. Among the critics, one finds an odd Aesopian language, in which pusillanimous whimperings against "heterodoxy" and "heresy" replace a deeper analysis of culture and concentration camps. And one would not expect Eliot (how absurd even to suggest it!), for all his talk of "an unsettled society", to include in his poetry a criticism of the effects of nuclear tests.

Our final picture is one of the individual genius of the poet and

7. But not quite. Jazz has an audience, and modern architecture has buyers. They are two of the most exciting and at their best, most *human* artistic developments of our century.

the bitter social realities of his time rubbing uncomfortably together. In criticizing contemporary poetry, one must not forget the heroic effort required to create poetry of lasting value in what is, after all, a very unpoetical age. Compare the rolling, self-confident melody of *Lycidas* and Shelley's "Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of mankind" with Auden's self-conscious, timid elegy on Yeats: "For poetry makes nothing happen; it survives/ in the valley of its saying where executives/ Would never want to tamper . . .". This is the poetry of an age in which there is no place for poetry. Or as Delmore Schwartz says in *Shenandoah* of the artists' fate:

All over Europe these exiles find in art
What exile is: art becomes exile too,
A secret and a code studied in secret,
Declaring the agony of modern life . . .

Frequently, all that is left for the poet to write of is alienation, his own and others. The poet has been alienated even from nature. No longer is it the friendly teacher of the Romantics, nor is it personified as in primitive poetry. As can be seen in Marianne Moore, it has become an object to be precisely described—an object completely external and other.

The problem of alienation is intrinsic in the contemporary world. It is a problem that all serious modern poets must face as best they can. Mrs. Millet attacks one of the effects of alienation, the social views of Eliot and Pound, without naming the cause. And because she does not analyze the cause, she does not appreciate the most satisfactory attempt to grapple with it that has been made, the deliberate cultivation of artifice. By artifice I mean that body of technique and tradition which is available to the poet for study and, at worst, imitation. The most successful modern poets have established themselves firmly upon the only rock projecting above the waves—poetry's great tradition. By deliberately refining their technique, by deliberately refraining from an artificial popularization which only insults the intelligence of its intended audience, many modern poets (in particular Eliot and Pound) have been able to write authentically great poetry even in *this* age. Some of this poetry has greatly expanded the range of the art. Eliot's *Four Quartets*, for example, have dealt with abstract philosophical and intimately personal questions that poetry never handled so effectively before. And the poets of the future will have a lot to learn from the poets of today.

In contemporary poetry, there are two tendencies which stand out because of the terribly poor poetry which represents them—these are the tendency towards obscurity and the so-called "proletarian" poetry. Such famous examples of unhealthy modern literature as the later work of Gertrude Stein on the one hand, and on the other, the poems in the book edited by Mrs. Millet, are effects of essentially the same social cause. That the first is a by-product of the deterioration of Western capitalism, while the second is subsidized directly by Russian totalitarianism, in no way alters the fact that both are manifestations of the alienation of the artist in the contemporary world.

The "utilitarian" perversion of art to serve the ends of the State, be it in Hitler's Germany or Stalin's Russia, is one of the sorriest symptoms of the rottenness of the age.

In the face of alienation, some writers have given up the effort to create beautiful forms and others have retreated into the dream world which is subjectivism. The most famous example of subjectivism, and the most tragic from the point of view of the author's talent, is Joyce's *Finnegan's Wake*. Speaking of this tendency, C. Day Lewis remarks, in his previously cited, *A Hope for Poetry*, "... they give way to free association, ... whereas poets till recently have fought the stream from the unconscious by direct methods, so to speak, imposing their personality upon it, dividing its forces and tying them up together with logical connections. The former process makes things difficult for the reader, because his associations with any given idea or image are probably different from those of the poet, and he is likely to feel as puzzled and uncomfortable as if he was listening to someone talking in their sleep." (Emphasis mine.) Elsewhere, Lewis speaks of the "distrust of logic and dethroning of reason brought about by the Great War ...".

Other poets, many of whom are honest, have attempted to leap across the gap between human beings by a process of compulsory communication. But although they *feel* poetic isolation they do not live in a truly human community, and they lapse into a world of artificial illusions and stereotypes. Take, for example, the case of Michael Gold. Why is his novel *Jews Without Money* in many ways a masterpiece, while his *Rosenberg Cantata* is so vulgar that it is an insult to the memory of the Rosenbergs, who were after all human beings? Because in the earlier work he wrote about people, but in his poem he wrote about "The People" ("People" is actually always capitalized in the text!). "The People" remains a perpetual abstraction quite independently of what real people do or want, so that a Michael Gold can support it at the same time that he supports Russia in the murder and deportation of Hungarians merely for asking that the army of occupation be withdrawn from their land so that they could live their own lives.

Naturally, these stereotypes result in the creation of an artificial world, which sometimes seems almost ludicrously removed from reality. When Auden's *Spain 1937* appeared (the finest poem about the Spanish Civil War), at least some of the Stalinists greeted it with cries of "Fascist!". It seems the poem contained these lines:

Today the expending of powers
On the flat ephemeral pamphlet and the boring meeting.

"Fascist!", cried the Stalinists; you must not insult the people's pamphlets and meetings! Or, the Stalinists apparently felt that the lines:

You gets a little drunk,
And you lands in jail.

from "Old Man River" were offensive to the Negro race. So, Paul Robeson duly replaced them by the "militant":

You shows a little spunk,
And you lands in jail.

Another example was the attempt to present the Rosenbergs as victims of American anti-Semitism.⁸ For this purpose it was convenient that the Rosenbergs be transformed into devout Jews. Hence, in the poem *Never to be Forgotten* by John R. Starks (from the book edited by Mrs. Millet) we have:

Killed, O modest Julius, sweet Ethel,
Leaving behind a locket of hair, a golden ring, a book of prayer . . .

In Russia immediately after the Revolution and during the relatively liberal NEP, some of the world's most outstanding modern literature flourished. Then, Pasternak, Ilf, and Petrov were silenced. Isaac Babel, one of the best short story writers who ever lived, was jailed and probably murdered after announcing that he would become the master of a new genre, "the genre of silence".⁹ Mayakovsky and Essenin killed themselves. Ignazio Silone has reminded us (*Dissent*, Winter, 1955) that literary suicide is a problem of consequence today:

Whenever I happen to consider the sense of bewilderment, tedium, and disgust characteristic of our age, my mind turns . . . to the suicides of Essenin, Myakovsky, Ernst Toller, Kurt Tucholsky, Stefan Zweig, Klaus Mann, Drieu La Rochelle, F. O. Matthiessen, Cesare Pavese, and other lesser-known figures. . . . the last writings of these men before death, or their last confidences to their friends, are invariably a confession of anguish or despair at the effort and the futility of living.

Modern art and totalitarianism, whether fascist or Stalinist, do not get on well together. Even the "subjectivists" are too free for comfort and tell at least part of the truth. Even the dream world of a Joyce is much closer to reality than a Zhdanovist poem. Joyce reflects reality as a dream does, but Ilya Ehrenburg reflects reality like a picture postcard. In this connection, it was only a few months ago that John Foster Dulles called on American newspapermen to be loyal supporters of their government's policies, and it was several months before that when *Life* magazine called for American writers to be lusty in their praise of the American way of life and less carping.

We have seen that the poetry written in our contemporary world suffers under the handicap of being written under conditions which largely deprive the poet of a real audience and which fearfully constrict his freedom of expression. We have also seen that despite these obstacles a fair amount of excellent poetry has been written in the

8. For a political analysis of the whole shoddy Rosenberg case, see the articles by John Clarkson and Irwin Edelman (who was expelled from the Rosenberg Defense Committee) in *Contemporary Issues*, Nos. 19 and 20.

9. This "genre of silence" has been adopted as a means of resistance by many writers in Russia and Hungary today.

20th century. The best of the poetry which is being written right now in England and America is quite competent, although it restricts itself to miniature themes. The remarks made by the 18th-century Japanese master of the *haiku*, Basho, to his student Kyorai, are pertinent here. Basho and Kyorai were discussing the following *haiku*:

Stabbed to death!
Was my dream true?
The marks of a flea.

by Kikaku

Kyorai said, "Kikaku is really a clever writer. Who else would ever have thought of writing a poem merely about being bitten by a flea?" The Master, Basho, said, "You're quite right. He deals with trifling matters in a most eloquent way". The best of today's poets—and there are a surprisingly large number of good young poets—do not seek to elaborate a general world outlook. Rather than seek a solution to the world's problems, they turn their backs on them.¹⁰ At its best, their poetry is marked by a genuine simplicity and a feeling of warm sympathy with the characters in the poems. The following is from *The Green Wall* by James Wright (Yale University Press, 1957, 93 pages) the latest in the Yale series of younger poets. It is as much unlike the poems of Eliot and Pound as it is undeniably a product of our own century.

Mutterings over the Crib of a Deaf Child

"How will he hear the bell at school
Arrange the broken afternoon,
And know to run across the cool
Grasses where the starlings cry,
Or understand the day is gone?"

Well, someone lifting curious brows
Will take the measure of the clock
And he will see the birchen boughs
Outside sagging dark from the sky
And the shade crawling upon the rock.

"And how will he know to rise at morning?
His mother has other sons to waken
She has the stove she must build to burning
Before the coals of the nighttime die;
And he never stirs when he is shaken."

10. In England and America, there are groups of young poets who consider themselves rebels against the entrenched or "traditional" poets. In England, these "angry young men" have made a profession of rebellion but have yet to equal the best work of those against whom they rail. In America, the sensationalistic, neo-Whitmanesque "Howl" by Allen Ginsburg is the major work produced so far by San Francisco's "angry young men".

I take it the air affects the skin,
And you remember, when you were young
Sometimes you could feel the dawn begin,
And the fire would call you, by and by,
Out of the bed and bring you along.

"Well, good enough. To serve his needs
All kinds of arrangements can be made.
But what will you do if his finger bleeds?
Or a bobwhite whistles invisibly
And flutes like an angel off in the shade?"

He will learn pain. And, as for the bird,
It is always darkening when that comes out.
I will putter as though I had not heard,
And lift him into my arms and sing
Whether he hears my song or not.

New York.

February, 1958.

Martha Millet

AN ANSWER TO JOHN BALL

I believe Mr. Ball mistakes the point of my article, "The New Priests of Poetry" (*Contemporary Issues*, Vol. 8, No. 32). To put that point once more, as briefly as possible:

My article is a discussion of the dominant trend in contemporary poetry (in the United States), not a condemnation of *modern* poetry.

To write in one's time is not necessarily to write as a modern. Modern art, art of a new kind, dealing with new ideas based on new perceptions of changing relationships (personal, social, global), in response to new challenges, and in forms called into being by aliveness to all this, can never be retrograde art, art of the dead that seeks to impose itself on the living.

Pound, Eliot and Tate are in the line of succession to the hierarchy of a priesthood of poetry. Whatever they once may have appeared to be as *avant-garde*, they have long since become the Old Guard. Their way has come to dominate. It had the happy advantage of being at hand when an age of conformity could best use it.

Ideology and technique (or style) in these high priests are not divisible. All three (like their lesser confrères) are poets, critics and teachers; theorists and practitioners; exemplars and proselytizers. Their retrograde ideology (expressed, let me emphasize, in their poetry as in their articles, etc.) is matched by their use of language to

break down the communicative power of language (without the least exuberance of the experimenter, the searcher for new means, pressed on by new perceptions), while addressing themselves to a select few. Meanwhile, and because they speak for the dead, the status quo has put power in their hands: they determine what poetry shall be admitted in the market place of letters, how the young shall learn of and look upon poetry, how critics shall practise microscopy—and readers despair. For they are peddling ideology hard all the time.

To cite, as Mr. Ball does, a few beautiful or unbeautiful lines one way or the other, tells nothing. Lines without context—in any art form, as in human concourse—are meaningless. The entire body of the work of the high priests must stand as evidence.

Pound, from his early tonic days to his degradation as apologist for fascism, snarler against Jews, and incarceration in a mental hospital after being indicted for treason (a place where he has been visited by John Kaspar, the Aryan knight); Eliot's 50 years of increasing dogmatism on behalf of medieval authoritarianism, mindless religion and sealed-off heroes (himself included); Tate who has created the union of all that is most retrogressive—presumably pure and classicist—in the work and views of Pound and Eliot, with the peculiar and strangely valuable to the powers that be, doctrine of the rich white master caste, which saturates all his work—poems, criticism, statements on society and responsibility of poets, in conjunction with and apart from the Southern Agrarians he leads.

Yes, the entire body of their work, their fragmentation of the thought, the feeling, the word of man, stands on the record, and when people concerned with the state of art and determined enough to throw off the shibboleths of "our great" that little by little have enslaved them, study this evidence anew instead of relying on echoes and snatches of idolatry accepted on someone else's say-so, the truth will be plain.

The bearers of the doctrine that man is damned and contemptible, that the meaning of life is sick and destructive—if indeed it exists at all—that we are worms, barely worthy of looking to the supreme authority of God for our sole *raison d'être*; the vituperators (elegant or not) of the mass of mankind, the urban populace, or simply Jews, or typists, but not of brain rot and soul perversion in the superior beings—not of H-bombs, or lynchings—these can never be called modern. They are merely another expression of Strength Through Hate, which in the Third Reich was called Strength Through Joy. (Goering was an art lover; Goebbels had two Ph.D.'s: one in esthetics, one in philosophy.)

The modern poetry, when it exists, will raise men up to a higher level of thought and relationships with other men. The contemporary high priests only drag men down to their own level, that of the pit.

* * *

One of the curious things about Mr. Ball's article is the way he uses mine as a peg for a Cook's Tour going into a multiplicity of matters I never dealt with even remotely. I do not believe a writer

can or should be expected to handle the entire realm of letters and all its implications at one sitting. I would not presume to attempt it. Mr. Ball does, and for some reason he determined to hang everything on my delimited study. Should Mr. Ball lay all the sins of all the unseen adversaries of all his theories to my account? Whatever his obscure reasons, I do not feel bidden to answer all or even most of the statements Mr. Ball chooses to make; but these very few:

(1) The relevance of the Rosenberg book to the point of my article is unclear. One can always give quote for quote, particularly in poetry, editors permitting. If Mr. Ball chooses to hail Eliot as against Michael Gold, that is his privilege. I may say I choose William Blake as against Allen Tate and John Crowe Ransom and Robert Penn Warren; Isaiah as against E. E. Cummings; Sappho as against Elizabeth Bishop, etcetera. How far does this get one?

(2) It is not for me to "endorse" Walt Whitman. It is for Mr. Ball—still—to prove him mediocre. I would associate myself with the views of Randall Jarrell on Whitman in *Poetry and the Age*.

(3) What can the tantrum-ridden Alan Ginsberg and Walt Whitman possibly have in common?

(4) People—poets included—are not yet so atomized, so automatized, that they can throw off responsibility or choice. Thus, if in our world, sex "does not have a wholesome meaning", it is our business to make it wholesome. So with all of life.

R. McGregor-Hastie

WELL BOYS . . .

another year draws to a close, and here we are to say Hello and Goodbye to each other. There are some missing faces I had hoped to see: Clayton, Bell and Hughes are not here; but I am sure you will all be glad to learn that they are settling down quite well. Indeed, Clayton has already been moved out of the punishment block and may even earn a little parole leave at Christmas. I'm sure we'd all like Mrs. Clayton to know how proud we are of her son's achievements; some of us never find the surroundings in which we can pull our weight and see success around the corner.

As you all know we have changed our name. Not in the same way as Minnie Halton and Trudy Briggs changed theirs at halfterm—we wish them every happiness in their married lives, they will be missed in the Third Form—but our change was an equally happy one. George Pitcher may not have been outstanding as a scholar here in the Thirties, before I came, of course; it may even be true that he could

never master the elements of reading and writing, and I'm sure all you boys and girls in the E stream will sympathise with him in this. George, like Clayton, found his part to play after he had left us. He joined the East London Rifles and at that historic action on the Pottiano Ridge won a gallant Military Medal; you will all have seen it outside the Metalwork shop, I'm sure. The Governors of the school decided that his example should be brought home to us all every day by renaming our little family The George Pitcher School, and last March the impressive ceremony took place; I am glad to say that it was reported in all the local Press, and photographs of you boys and girls were taken. Such a pity they were never published; but pressure of space prevented it—I am sure you will all understand. So now we are no longer the Clapham Road Secondary Modern Mixed. We, and I am proud to be able to say this, are, and feel, the George Pitcher School.

In line with the Governor's policy of elevating our aims and stabilising our traditions—and why should Eton and Harrow have a monopoly of tradition, tradition after all is only what we have been used to—we have decided to have a school badge, for the cap, the blazer and the PT vest, and a school tie. Mr. Angusson, the Art and Gardening Master, has designed the crest you see before me on the stage, and this has already been worked into the badges (on sale in the Secretary's Office now—there are two qualities, the better one, three and sixpence, the Junior style, one shilling and eightpence); the school colours will be those of the East London Rifles, amber and dark brown—ties in these colours, in two lengths, are also on sale in Mrs. Connaway's office. I know you will see what I mean when I say that jeans, windbreakers, luminous socks and a Tommy Steele haircut are scarcely good enough for boys of the George Pitcher School. A school blazer, you will find, goes very well with the gay colours of the girls' frocks and trousers.

The curriculum, what you learn here, stays unchanged; but this too has been renamed to bring our ideas, ideas George would have been proud of, up to date. The A Upper and A Lower forms will in future be known as the Academic Stream; the B Upper and B Lower boys and girls will be known as the Technical Stream and the C Upper and Lower, as the General Stream. The current of knowledge will flow strongly in all three streams; should your parents question you on this you may put it simply for them in this way: the A stream are trusted to have pencils and to write with them—the T Stream cannot use pencils (we can't all do everything, can we?) but *can* sharpen them—the G Stream can neither write with nor sharpen a pencil, but can, and willingly will, sweep up the shavings.

You will have noticed that we have been lucky enough to have the Television installed in all the classrooms: there are ten sets on each floor, in the charge of a Senior Master. The new Staff Rest and Study Rooms have also been completed and while you will be trusted to get on with your televising by yourselves, your friends the masters and mistresses can get on with their own private study, some of them for

Examinations, and so better equip themselves to teach you on the few occasions when you meet each other in school. To avail ourselves of the knowledge contained in the excellent lunch-time programmes, school meals will be served at 10 a.m. immediately after Milk and Assembly, and all forms will be in their seats, and the blinds drawn, by eleven; there will be ten minute breaks at 12.10, 2.10 and 3.10 for tea and biscuits from the school Tuck shop (we have you see renamed Mrs. Forgetty's too!).

And finally to celebrate the beginning of a new life together the Governors have decided to grant you all a day's holiday; the Chairman would like Morgan, Kelvin, Mockfood and Mankelaigh to be at the shop at ten—for the rest of you my usual warning, and here to give it to you is an old friend of the school, Inspector Hailebram from the Clapham Road Station. Inspector Hailebram.

(Mr. Davies, I couldn't see Brougham and that Jennings girl while I was up there; better have a quick check in the usual places. Don't want any trouble.)

Alex Scher

THE PRESERVATION OF FOODS BY IRRADIATION

Since the atom bomb was first dropped on Hiroshima, the United States Government has tried to justify its great expenditures for nuclear energy lies in satisfying the world's needs and thereby plays The program of "Nuclear Weapons for Defense" has met with only limited success in pacifying the fear people instinctively felt of the consequences of a nuclear war; so the broad program of "Atoms for Peace" was initiated to prove to the world that the real future of nuclear energy lies in satisfying the world's needs and thereby plays a constructive rôle in the future of mankind. Second to the utilization of nuclear energy for the production of power, the utilization of radiation produced from the energy for the preservation of foods has caused the greatest excitement in American industry.

For about half a century, man has known that ionizing radiations such as X-rays can destroy food spoilage organisms. It was only with the advent of plentiful and relatively inexpensive sources of these radiations that applied research on foods became possible. The initial dreams of the food scientists were indeed spectacular; sterilization of foods by radiation so that so-called "fresh foodstuffs" can be kept

indefinitely without freezing or refrigeration. The consequence of this feat could change the distribution and feeding patterns of the entire world. Subsequent research, however, has modified these dreams a bit; but the United States Government and the American Food Industry are still promoting research with wild enthusiasm and great expectations for the future of this new, but highly important industry.

Because of the great military significance of such a project, the Army Quartermaster Corps has spearheaded this operation by co-ordinating Government Agencies, Industrial Laboratories, Research Institutes and Universities in a program of evaluating the following aspects:

1. Radiation dosage needed for different degrees of sterilization, pasteurization and insect control;
2. Sources of this radiation and its practical aspects for private food processing;
3. Effects of radiation on the palatability of foods;
4. Effects of radiation on the nutritional properties and toxicity of foods;
5. Induced radioactivity in foods and containers;
6. Effects of radiation on containers used to package foods.

Let us briefly examine these aspects to see what has and has not been done in each field; but first, what does irradiation of foods mean and what are the basic concepts of this idea as envisaged today? There are two general procedures that can be used to irradiate foods. In the first method, the food is processed in the usual manner and packaged in a container that is resistant to the normal environmental conditions of heat, light, air, moisture, etc., and in addition resistant to permeation by food spoilage organisms. Then the food is subject to a bombardment of ionized particles of various intensities which penetrate the package and destroy the food spoilage organisms already present in the food. The degree of this destruction is dependent upon the intensity of the radiation. Since no heat is generated by irradiation, this process is commonly known as "cold sterilization", "cold pasteurization" or merely "cold preservation". The storage conditions thereafter are dependent upon the degrees of irradiation. The second method is irradiation of the food before packaging and then aseptic packaging to insure sterility. The advantage of the former method is that aseptic packaging, a complex and costly operation, is not necessary, but in the latter method the radiation source need not penetrate the container and the container will not be effected by irradiation.

1—Radiation Dosage

The first problem raised, naturally, was how much of this radiation is needed for the preservation of different foods. It was found that a very large dosage is necessary and that the smaller the organism to be destroyed, the larger the dosage needed. The degree of radiation is measured in "roentgen equivalent physical" or, abbreviated, *rep*. A *rep* is 93 ergs of radiation absorbed per gram of material, or for

practical purposes, one *rep* is equal to one roentgen.

Thus the following table:

Sprout inhibition (onions, potatoes, carrots), 5,000 to 15,000 *rep*.

Trichina irradiation (pork, etc.), 50,000 *rep*.

Insect deinfestation, 25,000 to 100,000 *rep*.

Pasteurization (destruction of certain bacteria), 500,000 to 1 million *rep*.

Sterilization (destruction of all organisms), 2 to 6 million *rep*.

Enzyme deactivization, 10 million *rep*.

For comparison purposes, it is interesting to note that the lethal dosage of direct radiation for man is 650 to 800 *rep*. Examination of this table will show that even sterilization with 6 million *rep* will not destroy enzymes that cause spoilage in many foods, and to date few foods have withstood a 6 million *rep* dosage without serious chemical and physical decomposition.

2—Radiation Sources

What is the source of this high-level radiation? Of the many sources originally considered, only two show practical possibilities for commercial use. The first is electron accelerators. Machines have been developed which, under high voltage, can accelerate electrons to a speed high enough to penetrate foods and cause sterilization. This device has the advantage of being very mobile, it can be started and stopped at will, and most important, it is presently available for pilot plant sterilization (the cost at present runs from \$50,000 to \$500,000 each). The prime disadvantage is that such machines have a very limited penetration capacity, so that the food must be sliced very thin in order for the beams to penetrate completely. The beams, further, cannot penetrate conventional containers at present. The second source of radiation is from highly radioactive isotopes, which can come from waste products of nuclear reactors and can emit high intensity gamma rays sufficient to sterilize foods. Plates or rods of radioactive Cobalt 60, for example, can be placed either around the prepackaged food or in a water trough through which the food is passed for a predetermined length of time to be sterilized. This source has the advantage of penetration and a constant steady emission of radiation which the machine accelerators do not have. One disadvantage is that these emissions cannot be shut off at will, since isotopes continually give off emissions until they are used up. These isotopes are not yet available in sufficient quantities for anything but small experimental sterilization; but an interesting aspect of this source of energy is that it may eventually help atomic power development commercially by providing a source for the disposal of atomic waste products as well as supplementary income to enable atomic power reactors to compete commercially with conventional power. In this connection, the Atomic Energy Commission is a highly interested and active collaborator. Both of these sources require elaborate shielding to protect the workers while the machines are in use. In the case of isotopic sources, a more elaborate protective shielding is required because of their

great penetration and continuous emissions. The complexities of shielding from radiation will not be gone into here; but these create still another factor to be considered in evaluating the entire program.

3—Palatability of Foods

The biggest obstacle in the path of food radiation today is that high-level radiation produces side effects which affect the flavor, color odor and texture of most foods. Since the purpose of radiation is the disruption of critical biochemical bonds in microbes and enzymes, it is not surprising that this radiation also disrupts biochemical bonds in the food itself which are responsible for characteristic nutrients, flavors, odors, textures and appearance. A dose of 2 million *rep* could result in the breakage of 4×10^{18} Carbon-Hydrogen bonds per gram, or approximately .003 per cent of the bonds present. Although this figure is small, percentage-wise, it is sufficient to cause noticeable physical changes in the food. Fresh meat—perhaps the most important food considered in this project—shows strong off-flavors, color changes and off-odors after sterilization. Many proposals have been made for avoiding these changes; but the most popular remedy to date has been to *mask* them with chemicals such as Sodium Fumarate, Sodium Ascorbate, Mono Sodium Glutamate, artificial coloring, gels and gums or simply large quantities of salt and pepper. If these methods are adopted commercially, this will increase the ever-growing and alarming rate to which artificial chemicals are added to the nation's diet. The argument proponents of irradiation use is that heat sterilization (cooking) will also cause flavor, color and texture changes. They fail to consider that raw foods, sterilized by irradiation, are still raw and must, in most cases, be cooked to be digestible. They must also realize that changes of palatability induced by radiation are of an entirely different chemical nature from cooking changes and must be considered as such.

4—Nutritional Properties and Toxicity

The breaking of chemical bonds by irradiation can produce many deleterious effects upon the nutritional properties of foods. Many studies have been made by research laboratories on this problem, using chemical and animal experiments. Here are some of the more critical conclusions:

As for protein, there is a definite lowering of the biological value (measured in terms of growth and nitrogen metabolism in animals) in milk, peas and other high-protein foods. Many amino acids (essential compounds of protein) are partially destroyed by radiation. When amino acids were added as supplements to irradiated diets, some of the biological values were restored to animals. It was found that amino acids withstood destruction better in a solid state than in a liquid medium.

Almost all vitamins seem to be partially destroyed or altered by irradiation at doses of 3 million *rep*. In the case of vitamins A and D, chickens fed on irradiated diets showed a *disastrous* lag in

egg production, until the diet was supplemented with vitamin D and Cod Liver Oil. As for vitamin B, studies on irradiated beef at 3 million *rep* showed the following destruction of the vitamin B complex:

Thiamin (B_1), 60 to 67 per cent.

Riboflavin (B_2), 8 to 10 per cent.

Niacin, 0 to 5 per cent.

Pyridoxine (B_6 —Antidermatitis factor), 25 per cent.

In the case of vitamin E, the fertility vitamin, egg production in experimental chicks returned to normal after their diet was supplemented with vitamin E; but then declined again despite this supplement. Fertility in female rats and sterility in male rats returned to normal only after vitamin E was added to an irradiated diet. In many cases these abnormalities persisted after the vitamin supplementation. At irradiation doses approaching that of sterilization, the following per cent destruction was noted in whole milk:

Ascorbic Acid (vitamin C), 100 per cent.

Vitamin A, 85 per cent.

Riboflavin, 47 per cent.

Fats are definitely known to be oxidized by irradiation, forming peroxides. Preliminary studies to date show that not enough peroxides are formed to be considered toxic at sterilization levels, but studies are still incomplete on this phase of investigation.

Although preliminary studies have shown no chronic or acute toxicity in general in irradiated foods, the Food and Drug Administration has not given its approval to the marketing of radiation-treated foods. This is understandable since the products of irradiation are virtually unknown and since each condition of irradiation leads to its own end products in each specific food. Thus before any general approval can be given, each food must be completely tested to assure that no dangerous chemicals have been formed by irradiation. Results of basic research to date have indicated that high-energy radiations often do create many compounds which are not theoretically predicted, some of which are complete unknowns.

5—Induced Radioactivity

Research to date on the ability of radiation sources to induce radioactivity in certain elements present in foods or containers has been conflicting and inconclusive. Theoretically, induced radioactivity should not occur below 8 to 10 million electron volts with fast electrons or gamma rays; but will vary with the type of radiation used, the energy level, the cross-section of the element being induced and its relative isotopic abundance. However, with accelerated electron beams, for instance, many products need up to 10 to 15 million electron volts for proper sterilization. With high-energy electron beams, neutrons can arise from the electron's impact upon the atoms of either the food or the structural materials such as the accelerator or the chamber conveyor. This neutron flux could cause the food to become radioactive. Although the hazard is believed to be minimal at present,

it is definitely a problem that must be considered. Studies are still being conducted on the energy level necessary to induce radioactivity, the particular species of isotope formed and the quantity of the isotope produced in irradiated foods.

6—Containers

Additional problems are encountered with food containers if the food is irradiated after packaging. Among them are the induced radioactivity of the metallic elements in metal containers, their possible change in structure and their interaction with the food. For plastic containers, there exists the possibility of a weakening of the plastic owing to cross-linking and scission produced by irradiation and as a result bacteria and insects may be able to penetrate the thin plastic films after they have been sterilized.

Since complete sterilization, including enzyme deactivation, appears to be impossible without destroying most foods, many researchers have proposed a combination of preliminary heat treatment to destroy spoilage enzymes followed by a relatively mild dose of radiation for pasteurization and insect control. Refrigeration will still be necessary but shelf life can be greatly increased in this manner. Many of the problems of radiation sterilization can be minimized in this way; but not eliminated.

It is imperative that the whole problem of food irradiation be approached with extreme caution. It should not be subject to pressures by governmental agencies and large food companies in an attempt to accelerate the commercial feasibility of nuclear energy or to be first on the market with a new product for greater profit—all at the expense of the health and safety of the uninformed consumer, who, through advertising and lack of alternatives, may virtually be forced to consume this product. In 1955, the first group of human volunteers were subject to irradiated diets. (These were nine Mennonite Conscientious Objectors who were given the choice of two years in a hospital doing war work or one year of laboratory experiments, in place of being drafted.) Since then hundreds of military "volunteers" have been given irradiated food, despite the fact that the long-term effects of this diet was (and still is) completely unpredictable. A pilot plant is being constructed for semi-commercial irradiation of foods, scheduled for completion in 1958, with the prospect of using thousands of human guinea pigs to test the safety of its products. If food processed by radiation can be developed so that, in addition to its keeping qualities, it is proved conclusively, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that it is still as pure, wholesome, palatable and safe as it was originally, then it will indeed be a praiseworthy achievement. Until then we should be wary. Experience with other recent developments in the field of agriculture and food processing, such as chemical fertilizers, stabilizers, softeners, coloring, flavors, preservatives, etc., has shown that very often so called "progress" in food production and processing has been to the detriment of the consumer rather than to his benefit.

March, 1958.

Karl Lonberg-Holm

SOME PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS ON THE RECENT BERKELEY FALL-OUT*

I would like now to give a summary and some of my opinions on the heavy fallout which began over two weeks ago. This fallout came, largely, from the Siberian testing that ended on or about March 22. The radioactivity in the rains here in Berkeley has been elevated since the beginning of February, running between 1-9 times the maximum permissible concentration of fission products permitted in drinking water. On or about March 20 or 21, a sudden upward jump in this activity occurred. By Friday, March 21, the rain contained 178 times the maximum permissible concentration for drinking water, and on Saturday night, March 22, 209 times the maximum permissible concentration.

The maximum permissible concentration for drinking water is arbitrarily set by an international commission and has been adopted by the U.S. Bureau of Standards. It is that amount of radioactivity from fission products that can be safely consumed by the population for extended periods, say over a year. Certainly much higher levels could be consumed without serious or grave danger to the individual, particularly for short periods. Nonetheless, there should be community concern when levels of radioactivity consumed reach or threaten to reach this level. In terms of counts per minute per liter this maximum permissible concentration is about 100 CPM of beta and gamma activity.

The State Health Department was tipped off by other independent laboratories and became aware of the upward rise in radioactivity by Saturday, March 22. They then speeded the analysis of their water samples. By Monday, March 24, three or four days after the fallout began, they began testing reservoirs and tap-water. There was no mention of the fallout in the Press until Thursday, March 27, about a week after the fallout began.

During the beginning of the next week, particularly between March 24 and March 26, individual scientists at the University of California became aware of the unusually heavy fallout. They made measurements on surfaces exposed to the rain. I personally have

*This is the script of a broadcast given over K.P.F.A. in California on Saturday, April 5, 1958.

repeated these measurements. They found that up to 20,000 counts per minute per square foot could be wiped from car tops with a tissue, and that up to 60,000 counts per square foot of beta and gamma activity could be counted from boards and tarpaper that had been lying flat in the rain.

These people, myself included, inquired into the extent of the monitoring program of both the State Health Department and the Federal Department of Public Health. It was found that monitoring was almost non-existent except for water and air in Berkeley and Los Angeles. In the only routine milk sampling, from the "Sacramento milk shed", three months were required for results to be returned from the Middle West where the samples had to be sent. Other foods not only were not checked routinely; but were also not being checked during the fallout. Also there was no way to find how much fallout had hit the farm areas. The State Health Department had been hard pressed to begin reservoir and tap-water checks on top of the rain water sampling that they had been doing routinely now for the past few months.

Some of the worried staff of Donner and other labs. held a conference with State Health on Thursday, March 27, and convinced them that food monitoring should be done. Professor Harden B. Jones offered his services and his laboratory facilities to begin this important work. Thus by the beginning of the week of Monday, March 31, a week-and-a-half after the heavy fallout began, spot checks on leafy vegetables were begun.

I should like to clear up an erroneous report from the *San Francisco Chronicle*, Friday, April 4, concerning by own rôle in speeding any monitoring. I was in no way responsible for any decision on the part of the staff of the University to meet with or co-operate with the State Health Department. My concern has been entirely with getting information released on the fallout. My urge for better monitoring occurred only through such public media as K.P.F.A.

Meanwhile, while vegetable checking began, the radioactive rain continued. For example, on March 28, 164 times the maximum permissible concentration for drinking water fell on Berkeley. Figures for the last two weeks have varied; but all have been over about 20 times the maximum permissible concentration and many much higher. It could be maintained that the early releases of the State Department of Health tended to gloss over this possibility. For example, the Thursday, March 27, issue of the *San Francisco Chronicle* stated: "By Sunday . . . the rain concentration had dropped . . . and later samples *which have as yet not been evaluated* [italics added] are presumed to have tumbled even further". Of course, we know now that the radioactive rain continued through April 3, which is the last day for which figures are reported. The same article also reported that "a department spokesman . . . said the rainfall presents no danger to the community because the natural decay of radioactivity and dilution of the rain water would avoid any measurable contamination of reservoirs". I might say here that this

has turned out to be false, as I will discuss later.

Let us return to the problem of leafy vegetables. Despite reports in the Press the other day, no statements have been made by State Health Department on the basis of preliminary reports from Professor Hurdén Jones at the University until this afternoon. Dr. Malcolm Merrill, Director of the State Health Department has said that there is no immediate danger; but that there has been a significant increase in radioactivity in vegetables. I hope we will be able to consider this report carefully during the next few days. A serving of vegetables might contain *up to* (the maximal figure) 10^{-2} microcuries or about 10,000 counts per minute of beta and gamma activity. This is as much activity as one would get from drinking one quart of water that was 100 times the maximum permissible concentration for drinking water. Therefore, I conclude that the contamination of vegetables in the stores right now may be a public health problem. Thus the State Health Department's concern only with the air and water monitoring is negligent. The State Health Department should have been set up to go into action immediately, checking our food.

Dr. Merrill, Director of Public Health, is purported to have glossed over these inadequacies when he said to the *Chronicle* on April 1: "[The Donner lab. testing is] part of the department's routine and continuing check of any element of our environment which might be exposed to radioactivity". Need I repeat that the impetus for vegetable testing came from outside of the Health Department and was done by others?

It must be said that State Health is not really at fault for this situation. They requested from the legislature last fall \$87,000 for a monitoring program and then \$40,000 for a radiation physicist. These were both eventually cut from the budget, but even if they had not been, they would not have been granted until this summer. Fortunately there is promise of immediate action on this according to the morning's *San Francisco Chronicle*. I should like to pay tribute here to Don Bess of the *Chronicle* for being the first newspaperman to get onto the scandalous delay in reporting the fallout and the beginning of monitoring.

Lastly, what about the radioactivity in our drinking water? Despite early reassurances, the level of radioactivity in some local Bay Area reservoirs reached levels several times above the maximum permissible concentration for drinking. This information was released by the State Health Department only after several days of prying by private citizens and the Press. I must hasten to add here that by the time the water reaches your tap it has, according to the latest public reports, less than the maximum permissible concentration of fission products, because much of the activity is removed in the filter plants. Also the high activity in the reservoirs may not be a serious problem because of the natural tendency of the fallout radiocolloids to settle at the bottom. However, not only was it untrue to say that there would be "no measurable contamination of reservoirs", there was; and it was of a magnitude that should receive careful attention by the community.

I asked one State Health Department official on Wednesday about a rumor concerning water problems of communities north of here. I was told that it was quite likely that there would be no release concerning such communities, if these existed, because "it would be unfair to any community to come out and say that its reservoir or drinking water was radioactive". Another place that I've encountered such an attitude is in Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People*. I wonder if Public Health might also conclude that it would be unfair to the truck farmers of the state to release full information on radioactivity found in vegetables?

In conclusion then I want to say that there is no immediate serious individual danger from our recent heavy fallout. No individual, even if he drinks water at, or close to, or even above, the maximum permissible concentration of fission products, or eats thousands of counts per minute of fission products with his salad, will break out with pimples, or get a stomach ache, or have his hair fall out. He runs no grave danger of death. He does, however, run some small added risk of death or injury. How large this added risk is, is hard to tell now, particularly because information on the fallout is incomplete.

The real concern I have is for our community attitude which first of all permitted State Public Health to be unprepared to monitor fallout . . . we are to blame for not being concerned enough. It is eventually our official policy of aversion to the word "fallout" that caused a six-day delay in the making public of reports of radioactive rain and a three-day delay in reservoir monitoring and an indefinite delay in the publicising of the full information resulting from this monitoring. All of this information should have been obtained and immediately released.

What about civil defense? No bombs fell, no cities and labs. and communications were destroyed, and yet weeks passed before the public health had been looked after adequately.

"Fallout" is a dirty word, and this is a national problem. Since we hope to begin nuclear testing ourselves in a matter of days, we encounter an official policy of minimising or ignoring fallout dangers. The A.E.C. could probably release nation-wide information concerning the last few weeks; but the only semi-official reply to such requests seems to be: "since the U.S.S.R. caused the fallout, we are not responsible".

As in the child's fairy story of *The Emperor's New Clothes*, almost no one would say that the Emperor was naked, that public health precautions for fallout and our national policy concerning nuclear testing were both bare.

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Andrew Maxwell

THE CAMPAIGN FOR NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT IN BRITAIN

The report by A. J. P. Taylor on the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (*New Statesman*, 21st June, 1958) is a suitable occasion for a review of the protest movement against nuclear weapon tests in Britain. There is no question but that, as Mr. Heron wrote (*New Statesman*, 28th June, 1958), "all is not well with the Campaign"; disillusionment is spreading. The question is: How has it happened that a Campaign, which at its inaugural meeting on 17th February, 1958, could command an audience of well over 5,000 enthusiastic people, has in so short a time both sapped the morale of so many who were eager supporters and failed to gather wider support?

In my view, the dissolution of the National Council for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapon Tests into the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament—the change of name is itself already revealing—was an attempt to substitute a new policy of which the linch pin was to be no longer the struggle for unilateral stopping of tests by Britain, but nuclear disarmament through negotiation and agreement between the three nuclear powers.

In an attempt to prevent this, Contemporary Press as one of the supporting groups, issued a leaflet, *For the Immediate and Unilateral Cessation of Tests by Britain—Regardless of "International Agreement" or Future "Negotiations"*, which was distributed at the meeting at the Central Hall, Westminster (17th February, 1958) and sent, with a covering letter, to groups associated with the Campaign and interested individuals. Most of the letters received in response to this leaflet (the most interesting of which are printed below) expressed agreement with the main point, though some deplored public statement of difference with the Campaign policy as tending to foster disunity within the movement at a time when unity was a peremptory need for success. What is to be said about this latter point of view will be found later in this comment and in replies to letters.

To begin with, it must be said that, notwithstanding any criticism which may be levelled at the leaflet, its main point was in harmony with the feelings of the majority in the protest, viz., that the Campaign leaders, in replacing the previous slogan "Stop the Tests Now Unilaterally" by a prime demand for negotiations between the three nuclear powers, to which demand the ending of tests was at most a secondary and ancillary matter, would in effect reduce the movement to impotence by making it an accomplice in the farcical game of

interminable and designedly fruitless negotiations. In the event, the leaders of the Campaign bowed it then seemed to the express wishes of the majority (which included some of the speakers at Central Hall) and in March issued a new policy statement in which unilateral stopping of tests, the stopping of patrol flights of A- and H-bombers and of all work on missile bases were the cardinal points.¹ It appeared then that, this common aim re-established, the Campaign could now proceed with a programme of activities locally and nationally, unencumbered by difference of opinion about subsidiary matters among those taking part.

However, the amended policy statement has never been put into effective practice. The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament is thus bedevilled by a fundamental contradiction breeding constant confusion, in that it has a publicly stated but largely inoperative policy corresponding to the aims of the majority which acts as a cover for activities by a leading minority of an entirely different character either disowned by the majority on 17th February, or never put to it for consideration at all.

To appreciate the disillusioning effects of this, two things must be borne in mind, which in combination have produced the beginning of an important change in public consciousness.

First, it has for some time now become increasingly clear to numbers of people that existing political parties have nothing to offer on the most momentous questions of the day; that their policies cannot be radically altered by working within the parties as their bureaucratic organisation, where it does not stifle discussion altogether, inevitably makes fruitful discussion impossible; and that the only hope lies in independent action and organisation of such a kind that it does not itself degenerate into yet another similar institution unresponsive to majority wishes.

Second, the nature of the issue raised for public consideration is itself of a radically new kind. Whereas before, the absence of an issue the gravity of which for everyone as a simple human being was plainly evident, together with other factors such as the long undisturbed reign of official parties, the inertia of custom, the prevailing tendency to see things in a fragmented and unconnected fashion and many more, has inclined a majority of people either to think in terms of party or to wash their hands of politics altogether; now the circumstances are changing. The existence of nuclear weapons and their testing, in so far as they have produced a danger common to all, are awakening a realisation not only of the need for common action, but also of the fact that for common action on so general a basis as the prevention of

1. For our part, we therefore sent a circular letter to all who had received the leaflet by post in which we stated that the criticisms made in the leaflet were out of date, and that, regardless of any other shortcomings, the present policy statement met the wishes of the majority on the question of the first importance of stopping the tests unilaterally, without, however, precluding the possibility of working for other more long-term goals once this first aim had been achieved.

the degeneration of the human race and its environment consequent upon nuclear tests, irrelevant differences of opinion must be, *and can be*, set aside, thereby making it possible for people at loggerheads on a host of other questions to work together without the least impairment of their freedom of action and opinion in matters not pertinent to the task at hand.

Clearly, it was the hope of those taking part in the protest movement against nuclear weapon tests, that the movement would meet these needs. "No more committees please!" they urged; "... the uniting of all interested bodies is a good idea *as long as it does not lead to a monopoly of the Constitution by one or two of the officials*".² At the same time, the original simple goal of forcing the Government unilaterally to stop nuclear tests, made an immediate appeal as being practical and timely, cut completely across party lines, and made it possible for everyone to participate without prejudice. There was in consequence the hope here too that something new was developing, that a way had been found of breaking through the constricting net in which official politics attempt to enclose and stifle radical opposition. (That many people in the Campaign steadfastly insist on its "non-political" character, viz., its essential difference in form and content from what is officially considered "political" today, underscores the widespread desire for a form of organisation which (a) would not follow the customary pattern of bureaucratic degeneration and (b) would remain independent of all parties, and deal with the issue which had called it into being without being diverted by extraneous considerations.)

In politics it can be taken as an axiom that whoever asks for more than circumstances permit will not only end up with having nothing; but will in the process also succeed in demoralising oppositional forces and strengthening the grip of the ruling minority.

The slogan, "Stop The Tests Now Unilaterally!", appears, at first sight, to have little substance, compared with the seemingly "broader" demand for nuclear disarmament (unilateral or by agreement). Yet, if one take as one's touchstone political effectiveness, the opposite is the case.

The demand to stop tests now unilaterally (primarily addressed, as it must necessarily be in this country, to the British Government), in so far as it has to be made at all brings into the open the deep cleavage between the interests of party and power politics on the one side, and those of the majority of mankind on the other, on a matter which affects everyone vitally, and about which it is in everyone's interest to do something. That is to say: the demand poses the need for *independent* action by the public to remove the issue from party politics and, as important, from international power politics, if the overriding interests of the majority of mankind are at all to gain a

2. See "Stop These Tests Now!", *Contemporary Issues*, Vol. 8, No. 31, pages 536, 538.

hearing, and influence the course of affairs.³ To put this another way: The demand is of such a kind that it ensures (if adhered to with rigid consistency) that the issue remains from start to finish in the control of those who are making it, for its success is the stopping of tests by Britain *independently* of the decision of the American and Russian rulers. It is, in short, the one demand at present given which does not allow the Government to temporise on pleas of consultation with *its* allies (the Governments of America and Russia); but which forces it to give a definite answer, yea or nay. Hence, everyone taking part knows at all times where he stands, where the Government stands, and how successful the protest is being. This virtue of being, on these important matters, clear cut, allows attention to be concentrated on the means of making the demand effective and, consequently, discussion of what is best to be done is *stimulated*, since nothing but *practical* tasks are involved and the determination to bring the matter to successful conclusion, viz., the compelling of the Government to stop the tests. What is to follow, this having been achieved, is not matter for present debate, since no one knows what circumstances will be like at that point. What can, however, already be said is (as has indeed been widely recognised) that were such a step to have been enforced by the public in Britain, the encouragement given to opposition in the rest of the world would be sufficient to force the American Government (already perturbed about the possible effects on world opinion of the new United Nations report on the hazards of radiation from tests) to do likewise, and to compel Khrushchev to change his conditional suspension of tests (a blatant piece of hypocrisy calculated to compromise the protest movements in the West)⁴ into an unconditional

3. Lord Kennet (Minister of Health from 1931-1935) put the essence of the matter very well in a letter to the *Times* (14th March, 1958):

... The discovery how to use nuclear energy for warfare threatens no doubt sooner or later to shorten the duration on earth of human life. All we can do now is to help make that not sooner but later, by total abstention from its use, or preparations for its use. Total abstention is the cause of humanity, and we humans ought to be for it, *whatever arguments there are against it for national, that is partial, reasons*. As a human being, the honour and glory which I desire now for my country is that we should take the lead in such abstentions. Incidentally, I believe that will promote our prosperity. (*Italics mine—A.M.*)

4. Bevan, whose nose for political dirt useful for beating down opponents is of the sharpest, did not fail to be enticed by the smell of the tasty dish offered to all true connoisseurs by Khrushchev. "If we are to have people who say destroy all weapons, we know where we are. But if you have people who say destroy the hydrogen bomb but keep other weapons, then I think we ought to identify them and their aims and see who they are," he remarked at a meeting (*Times*, 5th May, 1958). And this creature is one of those to whom A. J. P. Taylor (who arrogantly speaks on behalf of the Campaign without any mandate to do so) is offering the moral leadership of the world! Perhaps Taylor has forgotten that Gaitskell had only to dangle in front of Bevan the post of Foreign Secretary in the Labour Shadow Cabinet for Bevan to make overnight a most scandalous *volte face* which he attempted to excuse on the plea of not wishing to go naked to the conference chamber without the H-bomb.

one. As for the worldwide movements of opposition to the tests, who is there so lacking in imagination as not to be able to see that, heartened by such a success and by the sight of the governments of the nuclear powers in retreat before their organised strength, they would go forward in the changed circumstances (the strength and morale of oppositional forces is one of the decisive elements in the *creation* of favourable circumstances for action) to make new demands of the rulers of the world, viz., to use the relatively advantageous position their success had given them?

This in brief then is what is in principle contained in the undramatic demand for the unconditional stopping of tests by Britain.

What of the more dramatic demands favoured by the leadership of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament?

The essence of the difference between the latter and the former can be seized at once by noting that negotiations between the nuclear powers have been going on, are going on, and will continue to go on, that agreement (even if it be only the agreement to continue disagreeing) has time and again been reached—quite independently of what the leaders of the Campaign do, wish, want and so on. Such negotiations and agreement are of the very stuff of power politics: it is of their nature that they should not be controllable by the public, which is allowed to know of them only that which the rulers consider suitable as serving the particular interests they represent and pursue in wilful defiance of all reason.⁵

One does not need to spend midnight oil labouring the obvious, viz., that negotiations between the British, American and Russian peoples are in the present dispensation impossible, and that much of the hopelessness of circumstances today lies in just that, for were circumstances such that negotiations of this kind were possible, they would be no longer required, since people everywhere long only to be free of the awesome dangers of nuclear weapons.

5. Hence the absurdity of attempts such as Bertrand Russell's letter to the "most potent sirs" (who are only most potent because the Russells of the world by their political stupidities make it time and again impossible for the majority to render them impotent) to make these criminals who are poisoning the world "see reason". As if they were not aware of what they were doing until the Russells kindly informed them; as if they did not deliberately set aside the safety of mankind as worthy of no consideration when weighed against their own petty material interests!

The criminal frivolity with which the ruling minority treats of these life and death matters for humanity is high-lighted by the following account of Dulles's conversation with de Gaulle (*Observer*, 6th July, 1958): "Mr. Dulles was expected to offer General de Gaulle a nuclear power plant for a submarine . . . and to suggest that France should test a nuclear weapon as soon as possible to satisfy the demands of prestige before joining in an agreement to suspend tests. American Intelligence sources believe that France could set off one small atomic bomb in the near future, but that she has decided instead to wait until she has enough fissionable material for a more impressive test series. Mr. Dulles, according to Washington reports, was most anxious to find out if possible whether the suggested prestige demonstration would satisfy General de Gaulle or whether France was seriously insisting on building her own arsenal, a procedure which would require more tests . . ."

In other words, the demand for negotiations as the object of the Campaign restores the initiative to the Government which alone is in a position to carry on negotiations with others powers. Gone at one stroke with this are the independence of the movement and its reality as an opposition to Government policy. This is, in short, a complete surrender which leaves the Government master and stronger than before by reason of the fact that a sham opposition now monopolises the field, reinforces the illusion that the public is powerless to affect policy on important issues and helps thereby to bring about disillusionment, demoralisation and apathy.

Nothing different can be achieved by propagating the demand for complete nuclear disarmament by Britain, put forward by A. J. P. Taylor and by the pacifists who have a dominant voice in many of the local groups.⁶ War nowadays is nuclear war; the demand for nuclear disarmament is equal to a demand that differences between States shall no longer be resolved by war. This is, unquestionably, desired by the majority of mankind; the question, however, is how the majority can enforce its will upon the ruling minority for whom, as the American Government's attempted nuclear intervention in Indo-China shows, this is not the case so soon as what it considers its vital interests are threatened. It remains, unfortunately, the case that war is the *ultima ratio* of competition, and that we live in a social system that is competition incarnate. To demand unilateral abandonment of all nuclear weapons is thus tantamount to demanding a radical social transformation which would remove the *causes* of the at-present endemic nuclear arms race which at some stage must result in war. The merest glance at conditions in Britain today is enough to show conclusively that the time has by no means arrived when one can put this forward as a practical step to be taken now. On everything pertaining to nuclear weapons and war there is the greatest disagreement and confusion; hardly the most suitable ground for common action on an agreed slogan. In truth the demand (if taken as more than an expression of what will at some stage in the indefinite future be necessary to restore sanity in the world) is a quite empty one. Nothing can be done with it at present, as Mr. Taylor has himself experienced. People, he notes, "are relatively unmoved by the far greater danger of nuclear war"—far greater, that is, according to Taylor (and the

6. One would like to know from Mr. Taylor when this demand was presented to the supporters of the Campaign for consideration, and at what stage the majority opinion on it was ascertained that would allow him to assert categorically in his report that: "The Campaign now stands for unilateral abandonment by this country of all nuclear weapons". No such thing has, to my knowledge, been done. The *agreed* policy of the Campaign remains: unilateral cessation of tests, primarily. What right has Mr. Taylor arbitrarily to substitute for this some pet axe of his own which he grinds as though he had been commissioned to do so by a majority in the campaign? Mr. Taylor is sailing under a false flag.

pacifists), than the dangers from tests,⁷ about which people "begin to agree". In so acting, people show themselves, as is so often the case, far more intelligent than their self-styled leaders. The fact is, of course, that there is no imminent danger of nuclear war; but that there is immediate, actual danger from tests. What more natural than that people should concern themselves with the real danger and leave aside for the time being the prospective danger to which Mr. Taylor and the pacifists draw attention to the neglect of the one at hand! What is certain is that if Mr. Taylor and pacifists in the name of the Campaign continue plugging away at something which has no relevance to immediate needs and fails to give people the support they want and need in their real struggle, they will succeed only in driving away actual and potential supporters.

The views (other than unilateral stopping of tests now) advanced as the goal of the Campaign render ineffectual the activities undertaken by the Campaign, even where, as in the case of the mass lobbying of M.P.'s, these activities are in principle unobjectionable. The reason for this is that it is the general character of a campaign, its guiding policy, which finally determines the efficacy of all the particular actions undertaken in connection with it. Thus, marches, "symbolic" actions such as placing wreaths at the foot of cenotaphs, and so on, can, if they form part of a campaign which has a politically correct goal, at some stage have significance; whereas, in the case in point, where the campaign has objectives which deprive it of political significance as an opposition, such displays become the sham activity proper to a sham opposition. What wonder then that, as Mr. Heron writes (*New Statesman*, 28th June, 1958), "it has been increasingly difficult to get support for the Campaign since Aldermaston" (a march to one of the main centres of nuclear production for war). How indeed should people be attracted by activities which are pointless in that they are in no way connected with any attainable aim of interest to the public?

Deplorable as this situation is, it is none the less the unavoidable outcome of the dichotomy mentioned before, viz., that the agreed policy of the Campaign emphasising the *actual* danger (tests) has for some time now been, for all practical purpose, almost entirely set aside; instead, the major portion of the activities of the Campaign has as its ground a merely *potential* danger (nuclear war) about which nothing can in fact be done at present. This being so, not only has the independence of the movement almost wholly vanished, but, as a result, there remains in actuality almost nothing that the public can participate in, except just these (in the circumstances) pointless outlets

7. Mr. Taylor and the pacifists are, of course, in good company in putting forward such views. For instance:

The United States Atomic Energy Commission . . . in a letter to the congressional atomic energy committee . . . said that the bill to halt nuclear tests provided other powers follow suit failed to recognize that "the great hazard to the nation and to the world is not that of nuclear testing but, instead, the catastrophic hazard of nuclear war". (*Manchester Guardian*, 28th May, 1958.)

for public dissatisfaction such as . . . marches, mass lobbies and so on.

In a movement, policy and organisation are in the last resort inseparable. If the policy which at present informs most of the activities of the campaign and is threatening to supplant the original aim of stopping the tests unilaterally is allowed to triumph, then the transformation of the movement into the customary rigid divisions of "leaders" and "rank and file"—i.e., its bureaucratic degeneration, of which many symptoms can already be detected—must inevitably be consummated.

Highly significant in this connection are the remarks made by Canon Collins on 19th June last:

The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament . . . will rely far less than it has done so far on public demonstrations . . . After Sunday's rally in Trafalgar Square . . . the campaign will hold no further public meetings until September . . . Canon Collins made it clear yesterday that the period of demonstrations, like the Aldermaston march and the "mass lobby" of Parliament, was over. These had been "necessary outlets [*sic!*] for the people [*sic!*] who have been convinced that we are right.

Instead, Canon Collins puts forward a "new type" of activity, corresponding more closely to the needs of the policy of pressing for negotiations (about which, as I have stated, the public can do nothing, since the initiative and the negotiating are matters for the Government in concert with other Governments):

The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament will concentrate on winning over [*sic!*] to its policy "the politically important [*sic!*] sections of the community", in particular the T.U.C. and the three-party conferences . . . The most important task before the campaign now was "the slow background [*!*] work of persuasion [*!*] of the people who make opinion in this country". (*Manchester Guardian*, 20th June, 1958.)

To understand what is involved, some remarks of A. J. P. Taylor's must be borne in mind. After noting that the Labour Party had tried to kill [*sic!*] the Campaign, he continues:

We are not seeking to disrupt the Labour Party nor to challenge the present leadership [one wonders why not!—A.M.]. We [*!*] are seeking to win it over. We [*sic!*] offer it the moral leadership of the world. The Labour Party backed unilateral disarmament and moral suasion in the Thirties when these demands turned out to be wrong [a gem this, from a so-called "historian"!—A.M.]; and now it shrinks from unilateral nuclear disarmament and moral suasion though they are the only hope. We must be patient with these doubts . . . We must never forget that ultimately we have [*!*] to convert the Labour Party . . .

There remains nothing of the radical perception that drove people (conservative, labour and liberal alike) to attempt to launch an independent movement—the perception *that those in power* (and this includes the T.U.C.) *are responsible for the state of affairs in which the poisoning of mankind has been carried on year after year without compunction and that they could only be forced to stop by massive, independent public pressure.*

The conclusion is inescapable: If the attempt to impose this new type of activity geared to the needs of a policy of negotiation or unilateral nuclear disarmament succeeds, the movement will lose every vestige of political significance and effectiveness as an opposition to Government policy.

The "establishment" (as the ruling minority is often called) fears independent movements like the plague because they present a threat. It is no accident that the inaugural meeting at Central Hall on 17th February, at which the majority demonstrated its strength, was either simply not reported in the Press (this covers most newspapers) or given a completely tendentious coverage (e.g., in the *Manchester Guardian*). It was an attempt to kill by silence. The attempt failed; public feeling was too strong to allow so crude a manoeuvre to succeed; instead, local groups sprang up overnight all over the country.

Yet what the Press at the direct or indirect behest of the Government was unable to do, the misdirection of the campaign has succeeded in doing. This was made plain (if one could not already judge from the many straws in the wind) by a report in the *Times* (5th May):

Until a few days ago, there is no denying, both [*sic!*] the Government and the Opposition leaders were warily, even nervously, vigilant about the campaign for nuclear disarmament. They saw a real danger that the campaign might succeed in mobilizing [!] and giving purposeful [!] direction to the unease about nuclear risks that is common to all, and thereby in forcing [!] upon Westminster untimely [!] or unrealistic [!] solutions of infinitely complex and delicate political problems. But now there seems to have been a change. The danger looks to have lessened. Why?

The *Times* then lists various contributory factors: The Labour Party and T.U.C. declaration of disarmament and nuclear war, and in particular Bevan's smearing of those who are against nuclear weapons only, as Stalinist; the appeal by 618 scientists and Bertrand Russell's accompanying letter. What the *Times* says in connection with this is highly interesting:

There is another important reason . . . It is the discovery in the past few days of what might be called the quality of the propaganda being broadcast by one or another branch of the campaign . . .⁸ It is fair to say that . . . Lord Russell would be hailed everywhere in the Commons as a most formidable logician and as a singularly lucid and exact writer. Consider, then, the inference that politicians were tempted to draw when they found that the scientists' appeal said one thing (international agreement to stop testing nuclear bombs now) and Lord Russell's covering letter said something quite different (suspend British tests).

8. A particularly crass example of the "quality" of the propaganda (if one can even use this word in connection with the rubbish in question) put out by the Campaign is a printed sheet put out before the "great" march on London. The sheet bears the title in large letters: "H-Bomb on Britain? Something can be done!" After some general remarks about the destruction that would be caused if six H-bombs were dropped on Britain, the authors of

Why this illogical and misleading shift of ground . . . ? From all they know of Lord Russell, nobody on the Opposition front bench will be any more likely than Mr. Macmillan and his colleagues to assume that here was one of those unhappy lapses that come of over-rapid thought and an impetuous pen.

The effect was to compromise the Campaign because, quite simply, it was open to anyone to conclude: These people are *pretending* to have support they have not really got; if they have to go to such shifts, the reason must be that they feel themselves to be weak and are trying to give themselves a boost by means of a sleight of hand which they hope will not be noticed. Further conclusion: people who behave in this way are not worth worrying about; much less are they worth supporting since they clearly cannot be trusted to tell the truth.

Apart from this (which would not of itself have been decisive) the *Times* mentions quite correctly the element of showmanship that became evident in the Campaign's public activities. The showmanship, once again, is unavoidable since, as was pointed out earlier, the whole point of these marches and mass lobby was to make the "*rank and file*" (nauseating phrase) of the Campaign feel that big things were afoot. The *Times* then ends with these words, a substantially correct if sad comment on the degeneration of the Campaign:

There is indeed something reassuring to politicians in these latest turns of the campaign for nuclear disarmament. *So long as the campaign truly represented a cry from the heart of the people, a cry too deeply and genuinely felt to be bothered with "gimmicks" and too spontaneous to wait upon calculated strokes of theatre, it might grow into a political [sic!] force that would test the politicians' wit to keep it within bounds.* But the moment it is, or is made to seem, a mere cry from the lips of the publicity men, a beating upon the showman's bass drum, any political influence it might have had will be gone. Already the politicians are much less worried than they were. Last week brought them comfort. (*Times*, 5th May, 1958—Italics mine—A.M.)

If politicians were comforted by the turn of events in May, one can imagine how much more comforted they have been since Canon Collins made plain to them in June that some of the leading members of the

this telling document continue: "The fate of those who live in New York, Chicago, Moscow, Stalingrad, Berlin, Paris [by means of this list their solidarity with "ordinary" people is demonstrated!—A.M.]—and Britain, is our moral responsibility. Something can be done—if we will do it". Following upon this inspiring fanfare, calculated to whip up enthusiasm, there comes the crux of the appeal: "Here's what *you* [sic!] can do. MARCH ON LONDON." What follows this is merely technical. There is in the whole thing not one single piece of information relating to the struggle against tests (which is what the Campaign, according to the majority, was supposed to concern itself with); nor is there one political idea that would give anyone an inkling of what the protest was going to consist in, apart from the tramp of weary (and in the event wet) feet to Trafalgar Square. For this, of course, there was money. But no money for solid information, for protests against the *current* American tests, for substantial comment on Khrushchev's hypocritical offer; no money to help those local groups that were pressing for monitoring of background radiation.

Campaign are now proposing to restrict themselves (so far as serious work is concerned) to arguing with *them* in a gentlemanly way behind the scenes.

* * *

Though the Campaign has been dealt a severe blow, it can still recover, provided that it raise the *correct* demands (in the first place, unilateral stopping of tests by Britain) and carry on independently, if necessary forming a new committee for liaison between the local groups which still accept the overriding importance of the original slogan. The real strength of the movement, numerically and as a potentially significant opposition, lies in the local groups.

The first requirement remains, as Dr. D. G. Arnott has stated (*The New Reasoner*, 5, Summer, 1958), and Dr. A. J. Shillitoe has emphasised in a letter printed below, solid information. There is no way of gathering wider support other than by delivering the proof that there is a danger here and now, which the Government and Opposition are bent on concealing from the public, or, when forced by untimely revelations, denying or minimising.

There is much that can be done.

For instance, the new United Nations Report must be gutted and the essential facts and the conclusions that can reasonably be drawn from them presented in a way intelligible to laymen. A small section of this document already gives enough information to allow one to refute categorically *any* statement by Government, Opposition and their "expert advisers" other than that there are dangers that are not understood in their biological effects, and that every test merely adds to these.

Furthermore, statements, such as those by Dr. D. G. Arnott in the publication cited (pages 30-32) that the dangers of the so-called "clean" bomb are in the long term at least as great as, if not greater than, those of the "dirty" bombs, must be given the widest publicity, as must those of Dr. Shillitoe's printed below.

Not only must information at present not available in a form accessible to the public be presented; the Establishment must be compelled to yield information which it at present withholds.

For example: Some groups which have contacted their local authorities on the subject of monitoring of background radiation have so far met with no success, though in one case (London, Chiswick) the Medical Officer of Health was very sympathetic, having tried vainly to get this information, and asked if their letter might be forwarded to the authorities, as this evidence of public concern was essential, it being the only form of pressure the authorities would recognise, were it to be strong enough.⁹ If figures of background radiation were published month by month (or if necessary week by week), they could be interpreted by competent people (who would undoubtedly be found

9. cf. the interesting article by Karl Lonberg-Holm on the question of monitoring in California printed above.

to give their services) and the degree of the danger be given more concrete expression for the public.

Yet another possibility is the campaign at present being waged single-handed by Colonel Geoffrey Taylor (formerly Professor of Medicine at the University of Lahore) about the danger of strontium in milk resulting from the fall-out after the various tests. Publicity should be given to this, and to the cynical attitude of the Milk Marketing Board, summed up in the words: "This is a matter primarily for the Government, and we are only concerned to see that there is no unnecessary damage to the milk industry in this country by statements made in public which, when they are reproduced in the Press, may well give a wrong or incomplete and unbalanced impression". (*Observer*, 29th June, 1958.) Indubitably "wrong or incomplete and unbalanced" in relation to the *profit* of milk producers! And this profit is naturally more important than the health of the public, particularly that of children!

The movement ought, by concentrating on factual information and the political conclusions derived therefrom, to steer clear of empty "moral" arguments, so beloved of A. J. P. Taylor (and many pacifists).¹⁰ About these Dr. Arnott cogently observes in relation to the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament: "The moral issue is argued apart from the scientific, whereas in fact it arises out of it. Now from the Government's point of view, the beauty of a moral issue, especially when conceived in a vacuum, is that it can be argued indefinitely without reaching final conclusions. Mr. Selwyn Lloyd, too, believes that there is no moral distinction between an H-bomb and a bullet (Cambridge, 27th April), but the conclusions he reaches are not those of

10. If one can judge from the following, Taylor's views of morality in politics are distinctly odd:

My undergraduate friends at Oxford all say: "Give us the practical arguments against the H-bomb and cut out the uplift".

It is the same wherever students are in audience. There is a shiver of distaste at the moral approach. Yet we must make it. The Campaign will never succeed if we are in it merely to save our own miserable skins . . . Sooner or later we shall have to win the younger generation back to morality. I wonder where they learnt that it was buncombe. Was it from contemporary philosophy or from the day-to-day behaviour of statesmen? This country of ours fought two wars mainly [!] for high principle [*sic!*]; and the only lesson drawn from this by the young is that might is right. It now seems unbearably priggish to say that the country which went to war for the sake of [*sic!*] Belgium and Poland must not, in any circumstances, drop the H-bomb. But it is true.

It is encouraging and significant that students do not fall for Taylor's pitiful illusions about the reasons that compelled Britain finally to declare war on Germany in 1914 and 1939. One would not have thought it possible for anyone (except politicians whose job it is to attempt to make things palatable for the public by voicing all manner of moralising rubbish which they themselves are the last to believe) to talk about "high principle" in power politics. If that is what Taylor understands by "morality", it seems superfluous for him to offer the Labour Party the moral leadership of the world, for they certainly are amongst the most favoured candidates in the

Mr. Stuart Morris" [a well-known pacifist—A.M.]. There is in truth no need for more morality than the plain statement that no one has the right to jeopardise the present and future of the whole of humanity and its environment. This is a moral guaranteed to appeal to all rational people (and most people are on this matter fundamentally rational). What is required is to show conclusively that a handful of individuals composing the ruling minority in this country—as in Russia and America—have been behaving, and are behaving, in a manner which does and will endanger the whole of life on earth.

In this connection it is most important that the myth of scientific objectivity be broken down, that the public may recognise that large numbers of scientists prostitute themselves without compunction and simply refuse to acknowledge their responsibility to humanity, to act courageously by telling the truth which they know, and put the public in possession of facts to which they alone have access by reason of their work. It is nowadays not difficult to give evidence in plenty of the conscious lies told by scientists in Government employ (both here and in America) in order to make palatable the criminal actions of their masters. The Government trades on the widespread belief that scientists are "impartial" and speak as the facts are. This is, indeed, a cardinal point in Government propaganda for the tests. But there are not only these sins of commission; there are also countless sins of omission committed by scientists who, though they do not actually tell lies, fail nevertheless to speak out publicly. For these too, scientists must be attacked; for they have no right to remain silent on an issue of this exceptional gravity for mankind. An occasional weak-kneed "appeal" by scientists (such as the one with which Bertrand Russell was connected), which is politically absurd and scientifically worthless,¹¹

contest for this leading position. As for winning "the younger generation" back to morality: one has already taken a moral position of some substance when one refuses to clothe the actions of governments in "moral" fripperies, calls these by their right name (for governments might is right), and wants solid arguments against the H-bomb (not Taylor's "moral" nonsense). It is Taylor, not "the younger generation", who has to be "won back" to substantial morality, at least so far as the matter in hand is concerned. Characteristically Taylor considers self-preservation an insufficient "moral" ground for opposition to the H-bomb, and wants something "loftier" (such as the "high principle" alluded to before, perhaps). A less lofty mortal could well ask: And have I no right to wish to save myself? Especially when, in the case in point, it is impossible for me to save myself without at the same time saving humanity? In any case, what does it matter what private motive induces people to oppose the H-bomb, the tests and so forth? Provided they oppose the Government correctly, it is entirely irrelevant what reasons they have for doing so. Taylor, once more wants too much, this time in the way of pure, noble, lofty . . . individual *motives*, which in fact are none of his or anyone else's business.

11. The *Times* comments (5th May, 1958): "But the appeal, in fact, contained one scientific generalization and then passed on to purely political judgments that the politicians were bound to see as trite, and indeed to recognise as the threadbare phrases of the front bench."

means nothing. Politically the most rewarding work that scientists can do to help opposition to Government madness on nuclear matters is to inform the public. (For the rest, they are themselves but members of the public and *a priori* neither politically wiser nor more stupid than anyone else.) If they do not do this, they must be publicly reproved for their lack of responsibility to their fellow-men whose lives and children are endangered by their activities.

It is not my intention to give more than a few suggestions of what might be done in order to rescue the movement from the *cul-de-sac* into which the present leadership has led it; and what I have said must therefore suffice.

Above all, however, the lesson to be learnt from the present impasse is this: that an oppositional movement which wishes to be successful, that is, to stick to the correct policy which was the reason for its coming into existence, must organise itself in such a way that it cannot be diverted by its leaders into useless channels. All that is required is that it preserve *for all* unimpaired freedom of discussion of *all* matters having a bearing on the achievement of the common goal. As some of the letters printed below show, there is still current a belief that unity demands the sinking of differences about the best way to achieve the common goal. The experience of the Campaign has, it must be hoped, shown that this is not so. No individual, be he "leader" or "rank and file"¹² is omniscient and omniscient. In politics as in most things, "two heads are better than one", because everyone is liable to make mistakes, a "leader" as much as anyone else. For that reason, an oppositional movement which is at least to be in a position successfully to accomplish its stated aim (granted that it be correct) must be so organised that mistakes made by the leadership may be corrected by whomever in the movement is capable of pointing them out. This is not possible unless differences of opinion about the best way to achieve the common goal are brought out into the open, discussed and resolved. It is this alone that makes for substantial unity (as against mere formal, empty, *organisational* unity), because everyone can learn in the discussion, can end up by knowing what is what and can as a result act with conviction.

In a movement so organised, political mistakes (which can in the best circumstances never be entirely avoided), though they might be very damaging, need never, in principle, doom the movement to total failure; on the contrary, the ability and willingness to acknowledge and correct all, even the most serious mistakes, could only enhance the prestige of a movement which thereby showed in practice that the achievement of its aim (for instance, in the case in question, unilateral stopping of nuclear weapon tests) is its only *raison d'être*. In this

12. These distinctions, if they are anything more than temporary distinctions which can in principle be reversed when new tasks call new "leaders" to the fore and relegate erstwhile leaders to the "rank and file", are in all cases an expression of bureaucracy which formalises them and gives them a fixity unrelated to individual talent and the needs of the tasks to be accomplished.

way only will true unity be preserved and the possibility of success be safeguarded on the side of the movement.

If this be understood, the misdirection by the leaders of the Campaign, though costly and distressing, will have served a very useful purpose, the results of which will be felt in the political life of the country.

20th July, 1958.

Dr. A. J. Shillitoe, of the Department of Pathology, Hull Royal Infirmary, wrote the following:

... I would strongly support the view that our first objective should be to achieve the cessation of nuclear weapon tests for the following reasons:

1. From observations and analyses made on data which are now beginning to accumulate it is possible to give a forecast that nuclear tests made up to the end of 1956 alone will give in five years' time a concentration of strontium 90 per square mile exceeding the maximal permissible amount given by Dr. Libby of the Atomic Energy Commission (v. *Fall Out*, published by the Japan Council against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs, 1957).

2. It is now fairly certain that the concentration of strontium 90 in children's bones from tests already carried out will exceed that laid down by our own Medical Research Council in 1956 as requiring immediate consideration (v. Hoather, *Lancet*, 8th March, 1958, page 535).

I think we should emphasise this aspect since it can now be put forward in clearer perspective. Any talk about morals, etc., is quite useless idealism if we become a race of imbeciles and invalids.

Mrs. D. F. Martin, of Weybridge, commented:

... I have read your letter and comment with interest. I was at the Central Hall on 17th February, and was much impressed by Mr. A. J. P. Taylor's speech and the reaction of the audience to it.

A group is forming here in Weybridge I am glad to say, and I will make use of your letter and comment on the New Policy Statement, amongst the members.

In the course of his letter Mr. D. Harman, of Wingate Way, Trumpington (Cambridge) made these points:

... I agree with your leaflet and Comment, but I do not agree with your non-support of the Campaign. Unity is strength and it is better for all who oppose Nuclear Weapons to unite even if some wish to go further. Only thus can something be accomplished as a first step to something more. Hence the enclosed petition we are running in East Anglia. As a pacifist I naturally would like something more than this Petition but a slice of bread is better than no bread at all.

The weakness of Peace workers and Peace lovers is that so often they won't unite because each group wants its own way

instead of uniting on the lowest common denominator as a first step . . .

To this Nancy Brooke replied :

. . . It is essential that the first step should be correct as only its correctness can command the necessary *real* unity. Any adoption of a false programme, that the Council was compelled being assured, as profitable discussion would, of course, be ruled out. Even on grounds of present expediency it is impossible to justify the maintenance of unity for mere appearance, as it is inevitable that at some later stage—probably infinitely more critical to the success of the enterprise—the real disunity becoming decisive, will ruin the whole venture.

In our opinion the first step proposed by the Council in its policy statement was an incorrect one and we felt it incumbent upon us to show our disagreement as clearly as possible. Even at the inaugural meeting of the Campaign in the Central Hall it could be seen that our views were shared by a large number of the audience; and it is as a result of pressure brought by the movement itself, rightly scorning a false unity leading to the adopting of a false programme, that the Council was compelled to modify its then policy statement; so that the first step desired by the majority of the movement, which included ourselves, has now become the Council's first step.

Refusal to acquiesce in a false unity has in fact brought about a real one, and, the resulting clarification has given a real and not merely spurious strength. Failure on our and others' part to express disagreement would have led, in this case, to an incorrect opinion, which was also a minority opinion, becoming the operative one.

I think you will realise from the foregoing that at no time did we cease to support the *Campaign* against nuclear weapons; our disagreement was with the Council's policy statement as it was then drawn up . . .

Another letter of interest was that received from Mr. R. Bland, ex-Mayor of Nelson, Lancashire :

Thanks for the copy of *Comment* on "Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament". I have read it with interest and appreciation. Two things seem clear. First, whatever may be ultimately achieved—if anything—by discussion and agreement, will not be reached without some, probably much, delay. Second, the matter in question cannot wait. Every "test" is a physical and moral offence against humanity. Unless we are to resign ourselves to any and everything "they" may do, we must do something ourselves, not sometime, but now. The only something fitting the urgency of the situation is to stop doing this evil thing. Only unilateral action can justify whatever further talking we embark on. Words without previous abandonment of this criminal behaviour will be as useless as they have been hitherto.

Mrs. N. Grayson, Chairman of the Wolverhampton Society for Abolition of Nuclear Weapons, wrote to say:

I have today received your letter and whilst I can appreciate the points you make I feel in your arguments against the National Council for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons [this was at this stage still the name of the present Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament—A.M.] you are in the end doing your own views great harm.

Surely the main point is that we all wish to stop the Tests and then *hope* to go on to further disarmament proposals. Within the ranks of all those who are protesting are many shades of opinion as to how and when. There are people who protest for different reasons—religion, politics, moral, etc.—and I am convinced that this is not the time to split hairs or show to the public (which is 50 per cent apathetic—at any rate in the provinces) any divided opinion.

I am unconcerned which body represents and makes my opinion most effective—what I am concerned with is that my opinion is heard and that action is taken.

I enclose a petition form which we formulated before the National Council issued theirs. This is the one we are using and I am convinced had we only enough people willing to go to the public in house-to-house collection we should get 80 per cent success.

I think the main task is for us all to unite and I ask you most seriously to think again before you criticise at this moment.

To this Claire Ennis replied as follows:

. . . We do appreciate your desire for the opposition to nuclear weapons to show a united front to the public, and it was precisely to help bring about a *true* unity in aims and agreement on the means of bringing them about that we addressed our view on the new *Policy* to all Campaign supporters. As you will remember, the original policy of the National Council for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons Tests was very much more precise and clear than the first Policy Statement of the newly formed Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. Just the aim of, as you yourself write, first stopping the tests and then going on to further disarmament became confused; so that not only ourselves but many others in the movement too felt it very necessary to indicate responsibly that in the policy the change was not for the better. How else can one make one's opinion heard than by expressing it publicly? And how can we hope for action to be taken unless definite, immediate aims are pressed for? A total absence of criticism never helped anyone to do a good job, and if we want to convince others of the need to oppose the bomb, we must be able to meet any argument and know fully where we ourselves stand. Far from doing our views harm, our own action and the expressed views of many others in the movement, including the mood of the audience at

the Central Hall, all played their part in bringing about a much clearer declaration of policy by the Campaign organisers in their March Bulletin. The movement is all the stronger and more united for having gained a clearer expression of its common aim, regardless of the fact that, as you point out, people's *reasons* for supporting the aim may differ very widely. Responsible criticism is a different thing from splitting hairs, and any public body must be open to friendly and constructive criticism if it is truly to represent the views of its following. Our own views were advanced in this spirit, and we hope you will find the enclosed circular letter interesting in the same light . . .

Mr. P. G. Phillips, Chairman of the Nottingham branch of the Council for Nuclear Disarmament, made the following comments:

. . . The urgency of your points is appreciated; we must clamour for action not talk.

But now the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament has been launched and is gathering momentum, it would be a pity to undermine or weaken its effort by a splinter movement. It seems to me that the "activists" must join the Campaign and, whilst helping it forward, try by persuasion to get the policy statement altered to a more categorical declaration that it aims for unilateral cessation of tests *and* nuclear disarmament.

Of course, international agreements *have* to be talked out, but I believe that unilateral action on these lines by Great Britain would rally the uncommitted nations and many others to our side. This might well create that real third force, which, leaving the U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. in political isolation, might well yield an early turn-back to sanity.

I hope my suggestion finds favour with you. We shall need all the help and unity we can get, especially in view of the Labour Party's prospective "milk and water" campaign.

We have a powerful group of the Campaign in Nottingham and the city's Labour Party Association has promised us full support, i.e., despite the party line with which it is not in agreement.

In her reply Claire Ennis notes:

. . . We very much agree with your view of the desirability of politically isolating both U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. by means of a truly independent development, starting in the field of nuclear weapons; we feel it all the more necessary to work publicly for this standpoint in view of the latest Russian propaganda move in conditionally suspending tests, which has provided the occasion for linking, quite unjustifiably, the aims of the opposition in the West to those of Khrushchev! We hope that the spokesmen of the Campaign will have more to say about this.

We equally agree with your description of the Labour Party campaign, which is now being publicly played up as

"responsible leadership" at the expense of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. The record of the Parliamentary Labour Party in this connection can scarcely lead one to suppose that they will consistently pursue a really radical change of policy, other than by continuous pressure from constituency parties and the broad public . . .

A card was received from Mr. and Mrs. J. Tod, of Knutsford, Cheshire:

. . . We note your dismay that the new Campaign should be asking for more than the abolition of tests but that politicians should reject nuclear weapons altogether and go and talk common sense to their counterparts from other countries. In our view if you only concentrate, as an immediate objective, on the stopping of tests (we assume British tests in the first place) our politicians will answer you with a "clean" bomb. They have already boasted that the last tests on Christmas Island caused little or no radioactivity increase due to their scientists' skill in perfecting clean bombs and the careful way in which these were exploded. Alan Taylor has the line we think most likely to gain quick success, i.e., reject these things because they are wrong, reject the attitude of domination by bombs, show by example that we have no faith in the policy used in Hungary, Algeria and Cyprus. For ourselves this means a change of heart and an awareness that great spiritual strength is needed and we believe this strength is best found in faith in God and a true following of the teaching of Jesus.

In reply to this B. Antonis wrote:

. . . The reason for our concentration on the abolition of nuclear tests as the *immediate* objective is very simple—namely that they are the immediate and thoroughly real danger to mankind, and therefore must be placed before other (long term) objectives such as total nuclear (and other) disarmament, etc. This was apparently clear to you from our statement, since you introduce the question of "clean" bombs as a reason for changing our approach. If it were proven beyond all possible doubt that all future nuclear tests would be absolutely "clean", there would indeed be reason for removing the special accent on tests; but this is by no means the case. At the time of the Christmas Island tests British politicians did assert that this series was "cleaner"; but in view of the record of politicians and other interested parties, even on the matter of radiation hazard alone, we have never accepted their bald assertions as anything more than an attempt to undermine the oppositional forces. Ever since the inception of nuclear tests they have furiously denied every new discovery regarding the hazards . . . until the overwhelming weight of factual material has forced them to admit the existence of one hazard after another (while still attempting to play them down).

It was, therefore, not surprising to learn from the

Manchester Guardian of 10th April (article, "Who explodes the dirtiest bomb?") that information accumulated by official American atomic energy authorities and revealed by Dr. Willard Libby appears to show that "earlier assertions that the British bombs (Christmas Island) were 'cleaner', if not 'clean', are without much foundation . . . [since] . . . the increase of radioactivity which followed them appears to have been comparable with earlier hydrogen bomb explosions such as the first Russian test of a megaton bomb", and (as stated in the same article) produced about one-fifth as much pollution of the stratosphere as the U.S. Bikini explosion of March, 1954, which "produced more pollution than all the hydrogen bombs [combined—B.A.] which have been exploded since".

Though there has been no official admission on the part of the British Government that they still have no "clean" bombs, this is clear enough from President Eisenhower's recent statement to this effect, and his offer to show Britain how she may achieve them. While this statement of Eisenhower's implies that the American authorities have them, this is certainly not the case, because they themselves have recently laid so much emphasis on the "need" to develop "clean" bombs and have stated that *five more years of testing* may be needed for the achievement of this aim.

There are good grounds for believing that this latest "reason" for further tests is again something cooked up purely to confuse people and undermine opposition; but even if we take it at its face value, we "enjoy" the prospect of five further years of more or less "dirty" explosions. This prospect must be viewed in the light of (amongst others) the following facts:

[Here Mr. Antonis quotes the substance of Dr. Shillitoe's letter reproduced above—A.M.]

Thus, when our politicians answer us with a "clean" bomb, it is our task to show up the lie of their "answer", so that they may not succeed in their attempt to confuse the oppositional forces.

While, with you and Alan Taylor, we reject evils because they are evils, we believe that the practical way to fight them is to join with public opposition where it arises and attempt to help carry it through to a successful conclusion.

Widespread opposition has arisen to nuclear tests because of the very real hazards which they already present. The first policy statement of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament had to be revised to a form which removed the emphasis from "negotiations" and placed it *once again* on unconditional rejection of nuclear weapons and immediate unilateral action on tests, etc., because of pressure from the majority, for whom the dangers of tests are still the decisive issue.

Your "change of heart" implies that practically everyone has a share in the responsibility for the evils which exist today,

whereas in fact it is the politicians, government scientists, interested industrialists, etc., who alone are guilty (each for his own part in any particular evil). In principle it is only necessary for *them* to have a "change of heart" for all to be well; but in practice we must rely on growing public pressure forcing them to abandon their criminal acts, through successful struggles on particular issues . . .

Rebecca Shelley and Paul Ecker

MATERIAL AND DOCUMENTS

The following letters were published in No More Hiroshimas! (issued by the Japan Council Against A- and H-Bombs) in January and March, 1958, respectively. Miss Shelley's letter is a reply to a letter by Paul Ecker published in No More Hiroshimas! in October, 1957, and reprinted in Contemporary Issues, Vol. 9, No. 34.

NOT BY ONE BUT ALL MEANS TO PEACE ON EARTH

Rebecca Shelley.

In accepting an invitation to comment on the *Contemporary Issues* article, I pray not to slide down the brink of error where the author dangles. The danger lurks in the sharp little word *only*. Since time began, militarists have preached that peace can be won and freedom safeguarded *only* by weapons of war. Perhaps this explains why so many who lose faith in armaments, see the coming peace *only* within another limited horizon. How beautifully could peace bless the earth, if the people would *only* accept their guidance. Equally dogmatic among secular peace advocates are those who envisage peaceful coexistence of differing systems *only* under a universally adopted Constitution providing for a worldwide Federal Union akin to the U.S.A.

No need to multiply examples. Nor do I object to *Contemporary Issues* promoting "petitions which call for *only* one thing . . . The immediate unilateral cessation of nuclear tests by the United States". Indeed I have signed a petition to President Eisenhower reading in (the letter) part: "We dare not continue to tamper with the very biological foundations of our lives on earth. At a time when every government admits that with existing nuclear weapons another war would virtually extinguish human existence, we, as citizens of the United States, feel that nothing can justify the appalling dangers to which humanity is being exposed by the continued testing of nuclear weapons.

"We therefore request the immediate cessation of tests by the United States Government—irrespective of any subterfuges and manoeuvres by totalitarian Russia—in the conviction that nuclear experiments by any government, including our own, contribute to irreversible damage to human health without point or purpose to the interests or safety of the American people." (I did not altogether approve the petition's wording; but signed it to express support of its purpose.) Signing the petition seemed to me consistent with Section 1 Subhead (c) of the Recommendations issued by the Tokyo Conference asking that action "take manifold forms according to the specific conditions of individual countries, regions or places . . ."

I am also associated with the Prayer and Conscience Vigil now being held in our Nation's Capital, one of whose aims is "To persuade the United States Government immediately to call off the nuclear tests announced for April at Eniwetok in the Pacific". Another purpose is to "persuade the people of all countries engaged in the testing and production of nuclear weapons and ICBM to call upon their respective governments immediately to stop such testing and production.

"In particular to call upon our own government, as a minimum step, to suspend testing of such weapons, regardless of what any other government may at the moment be prepared to do, as a means of producing a new atmosphere in international affairs and giving a clear witness to our readiness to take risks and make sacrifices for the peace of mankind."

And finally, "To help develop a powerful public sentiment for disarmament, ending war, finding non-violent ways to deal with conflict, and putting the vast resources and energies now at the disposal of mankind to healing and constructive uses."

With so large an area of agreement between us, it seems to me, *Contemporary Issues* is grievously mistaken in judging the Tokyo Conference program "a fatal dissipation of the energies of a movement from which the world has a right to expect great things". To say that even if the International Common Action Days reach the objective of a Resolution by the U.N. General Assembly calling upon the great powers to conclude an agreement for the unconditional banning of A- and H-Bomb tests, the movement would "find itself in the same position" as before, is to discount altogether the powerful force of world public opinion.

It is like saying that the status of freedom and the independence of the English colonies in America were "in the same position" during the days and weeks immediately following July 4th, 1776, as in the chaotic, doubtful days before Thomas Jefferson, George Washington and other founding fathers adopted the immortal Declaration of Independence, and pledged their lives and honor to implement it.

If as an American I speak provincially or too simply in terms of my country, I beg pardon of *No More Hiroshimas!* readers. Yet I beg its editors to let it express the honest sentiments and convictions of representative writers from all over the world and all sections of

world public opinion. In a sense I am such a writer representing the pacifist opinion of my beloved country. So let me say that even as the Continental Congress of 1776 meeting in Philadelphia not as a political State but as the truest representative body then possible for the 13 rebellious English colonies: so today the General Assembly of the United Nations is for the world's people in revolt [against?] war the Parliament of Humanity in process of becoming, their best and most workable instrumentality to build a warless world. In speed and effectiveness of communication its component members as States and as peoples are much close[r] than were the people of the 13 original American Colonies.

Does *Contemporary Issues* mean to say that the people of the world struggling for peace: now especially struggling to ban the most monstrous weapon the war-gods ever thrust on mankind: does it mean to say that the people ought to ignore the United Nations as their protector against this hideous scourge of war? Does it mean that relief must come primarily from the three offenders against the health and genetic safety of mankind? Rather than from the collective efforts of the vast majority against whom the hideous offense is being perpetrated?

Only three member nations of the United Nations possess nuclear weapons. It is safe to say that until the World Conference met in Tokyo, August 6-16 of last year A.D. 1957, no concerted popular worldwide movement had ever been made on behalf of U.N. action for banning A- and H-Bombs and bringing about disarmament. Without deprecating the efforts of the World Peace Council, it must be said frankly, in the U.S.A. they had little or no affirmative influence. The fact that it was so largely sponsored by scientists and religious leaders, gives it a high standing in influential circles and promises a respectful hearing as it speaks for world opinion mobilized against nuclear weapons and their testing.

Where shall this great international agency of peoples' power and world public opinion now direct its efforts? Where more effectively than towards the world's most powerful peace agency? *Contemporary Issues* cites Japan's appeal to the offending powers to halt the bomb tests, as argument that such protestations should be continued in the same direction, with popular reinforcements. Exactly the opposite is indicated. It is a principle of both natural and "lawyers" [*sic!*] that when the offender refuses to "cease and desist" from injuring an innocent party, the injured one perforce appeals to a higher power. In this case the General Assembly of the United Nations represents and actually is the power of world public opinion aiding the victim of aggression (for the U.S.A.; the U.K. and the U.S.S.R. respectively already stand before the bar of History as aggressors against the health and well-being of all mankind).

Omitting surplus wordage, let us now consider another aspect not mentioned in the Tokyo Declaration and Appeal but well oriented in the Lawyers' Commission of the World Conference Against A- and H-Bombs and for Disarmament. The point was indicated in the suggested Resolutions which Delegate Arthur Delamarter carried to

the Conference from the Michigan Fellowship of Reconciliation, reading somewhat as follows: "The governments carrying on nuclear tests should be haled into an International Court of Justice and enjoined from polluting the sea, earth and atmosphere belonging to all mankind."

Let us speak and act on grounds of reason and reality. It is understandable that some governments: for example the Japanese Government may not feel called upon or presently able to take action against any of the three offending governments. One can easily think of others who might do so: others whose citizens sent delegates to the Tokyo Conference. So let us—the peace-minded people of the world—continue to support the Tokyo Recommendations on behalf of action appealing to the U.N. General Assembly for Resolutions against nuclear weapons and nuclear testings. Such Resolutions—if ignored by the nuclear powers—would then add substance to an appeal to the International Court of Justice, presumably made by a nation or jointly by nations in the Pacific Ocean testing area.

I make this suggestion seriously, as part of my comment on what seems to me rather shallow criticism of the World Conference Declaration and Appeal. But I am a lay person and the suggestion should be enlarged and oriented by lawyers and judges. I hope to hear from them and see their articles in the next issue of *No More Hiroshimas!* Meantime I beg leave to use my allotted space to contribute a human note I felt somewhat lacking in the official Conference findings.

Let all we do and say be done in the spirit of human brotherhood extended to all human beings including those who are hideously involved in the promotion, making and testing of nuclear weapons against which I protest with all my powers, of which this little song is an expression:

Hail Brotherhood! the Peace Evangel!

Through clouds of doom there shines the sun:

Above all nations, creeds and races,

Humanity is one.

One family of sons and daughters:

From saints and Titans glorious deeds,

From great and small as each is able,

To each the bread he needs.

Oh toilers! Robbed! Exploited! Cheated!

Of human rights God made thine own!

For wrongs Imperialism committed,

Let Brotherhood atone.

(Prayerfully) Rest in peace! Oh Hiroshima!

Thy slain and slayer bridge the span,

From out thy ashes leaps the rainbow,

The Brotherhood of man.

Hail Brotherhood! The people's banner

Proclaiming war and hunger cease.

All races own the banner's rainbow

Of Freedom, bread and peace.

LET US FACE THE FACT

Paul Ecker

A prolonged exchange of polemics on tactics to be followed by the movement against nuclear testing is not our intention. It is nevertheless not possible to permit Rebecca Shelley's arguments in the January issue of this bulletin against the *Contemporary Issues* position to go unanswered.

The gist of Miss Shelley's argument is contained in a section of her reply that is at once a terrible distortion and an amazing piece of naïveté. She writes:

Does *Contemporary Issues* mean to say that the people of the world struggling for peace: now especially struggling to ban the most monstrous weapon the war-gods ever thrust on mankind: Does it mean to say that the people ought to ignore the United Nations as their protector against the hideous scourge of war? Does it mean that relief must come primarily from the three offenders against the health and genetic safety of mankind, rather than from the collective efforts of the vast majority against whom the hideous offense is being perpetrated?

No, *Contemporary Issues* does not mean to say that (or most of it, anyway). Only an interpretation of my article seasoned with a generous pinch of malice could claim otherwise. In Miss Shelley's case, misunderstanding rather than malice is indicated, but the result is almost as lamentable. *Contemporary Issues* believes precisely that "relief must come . . . from the collective efforts of the vast majority" and it is precisely because of this that we urge that majority not to depend on (yes, to ignore, if Miss Shelley will have it so) the United Nations. For it is difficult to see how an objective instead of an emotional examination of the United Nations can lead one to conclude that it represents that general collectivity of which Miss Shelley speaks. The unfortunate fact is that this international assemblage represents the *governments*, not the people, of the world; most of these governments do not even pretend to be representative, and most of those that do deserve to have their pretensions closely examined. These governments are gathered in an assemblage that avowedly has no power to act; such power of action is reserved for a body, the Security Council, in which the veto of any one of the three offenders of which Miss Shelley speaks is sufficient to paralyze that power. Need we say more about what Miss Shelley terms "the world's most powerful peace agency"?

Miss Shelley, to be sure, will reply that moral force of world opinion is what she hopes to direct against the three offenders through the United Nations. Well, that moral force, given substance by a number of concrete actions which it is possible for the people of the offending countries and the governments of others to take (denial of bases, severance of certain trade relations, etc.) is precisely what we of *Contemporary Issues* hope to bring to bear *directly* upon the offending governments through popular action. If the United Nations General Assembly becomes one avenue for such popular expression (even the most difficult one), we shall have no objection, but to become

a vehicle for world sentiment rather than a merry-go-round for it, that body would have to cast aside its perpetual sponsorship of fruitless disarmament negotiations and issue a clear-cut call to the three powers to cease all nuclear weapons testing immediately.

To speak, on the other hand, as Miss Shelley does, of a U.N. resolution calling for *international agreement* as equivalent to the American Declaration of Independence . . . well, historical analogy stands disarmed. The true comparison, if Miss Shelley wants to look in this direction, would have been if the Founding Fathers, instead of declaring independence and taking sword in hand, had abjured all action, taken up their pens to inscribe an appeal to England and the other European governments to negotiate freedom for the colonies. Will the U.N. delegates pledge their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor in struggle against the three governments that conduct nuclear testing? Perhaps tomorrow . . . not today.

I trust that little be said, in the light of the foregoing, about the United Nations as that "higher legal power" of which Miss Shelley speaks. When the United Nations is able to issue an injunction against nuclear testing and back it up with a police force, such legalistic jargon might have meaning. (Of course, the police force would be dwarfed in size by the force at the disposal of the criminals, necessitating, I suppose, the arming of the entire population as vigilantes—but enough of this nonsense.) The case is only made more, rather than less, ridiculous by posing an appeal to the International Court of Justice as an alternative when the United Nations resolution is ignored (as Miss Shelley realizes it will be). Will Miss Shelley inform us of the last occasion on which one of the great powers paid heed to a decision by the International Court (if indeed she can tell us when it last issued a decision on any matter of moment)?

Let us face the facts of world politics. Our salvation lies neither in government delegates nor in lawyers but in ourselves. We do not, as Miss Shelley suggests, propose to leave it up to the governments to correct their derelictions, but to mobilize the force of world opinion in such strength and with such directness that it will be impossible for them to ignore it. The first necessity, however, is to strip the veils of illusion away from our own eyes and to learn in which direction to look.

BUSINESS AS USUAL.

MOSCOW, AUGUST 5.

Mr. Khrushchev and Mr. Stevenson, leader of the Democratic party in the United States, had a long talk here to-day. Mr. Stevenson has been in Russia since July 12, mainly to discuss copyright questions concerning publication of American books and plays.

(Manchester Guardian, 6th August, 1958.)

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